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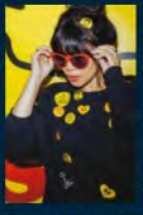

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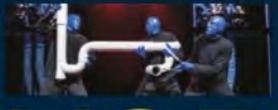

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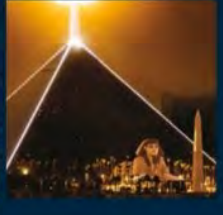

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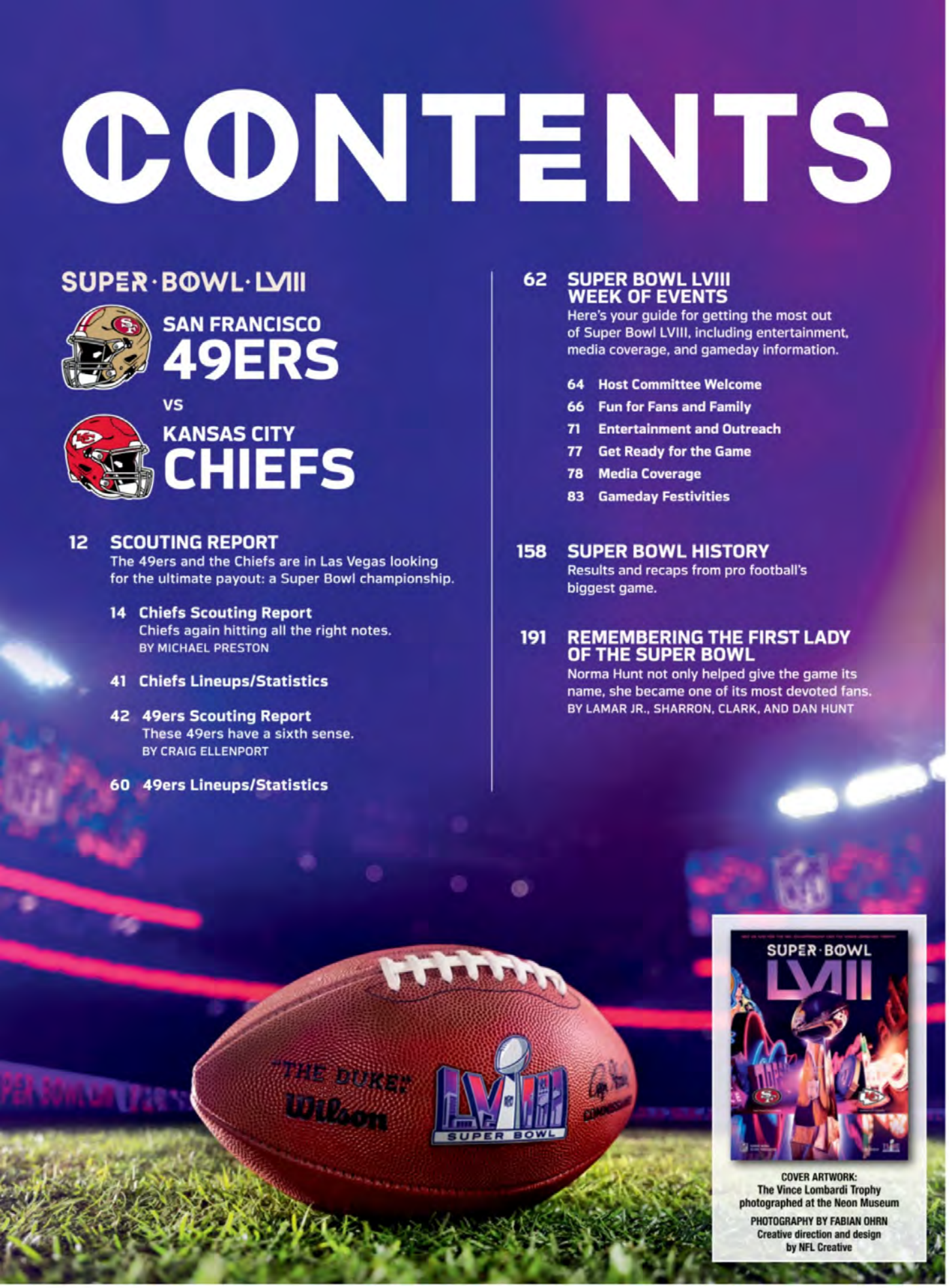

COVER ARTWORK:
The Vince Lombardi Trophy photographed at the Neon Museum

PHOTOGRAPHY BY FABIAN OHRN
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ESPN

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SUPER BOWL LVIII GAME PROGRAM

Allegiant Stadium, February 11, 2024

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Associate Publisher Adam Scharff
Vice President of Operations Dave Baribeault
Editor John Veneziano
Associate Editor Andre Christopher
Senior Designer George Lee
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Marketing Consultants Sunday Ormond, Pippa Schulte

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Allegiant Stadium Seating Chart

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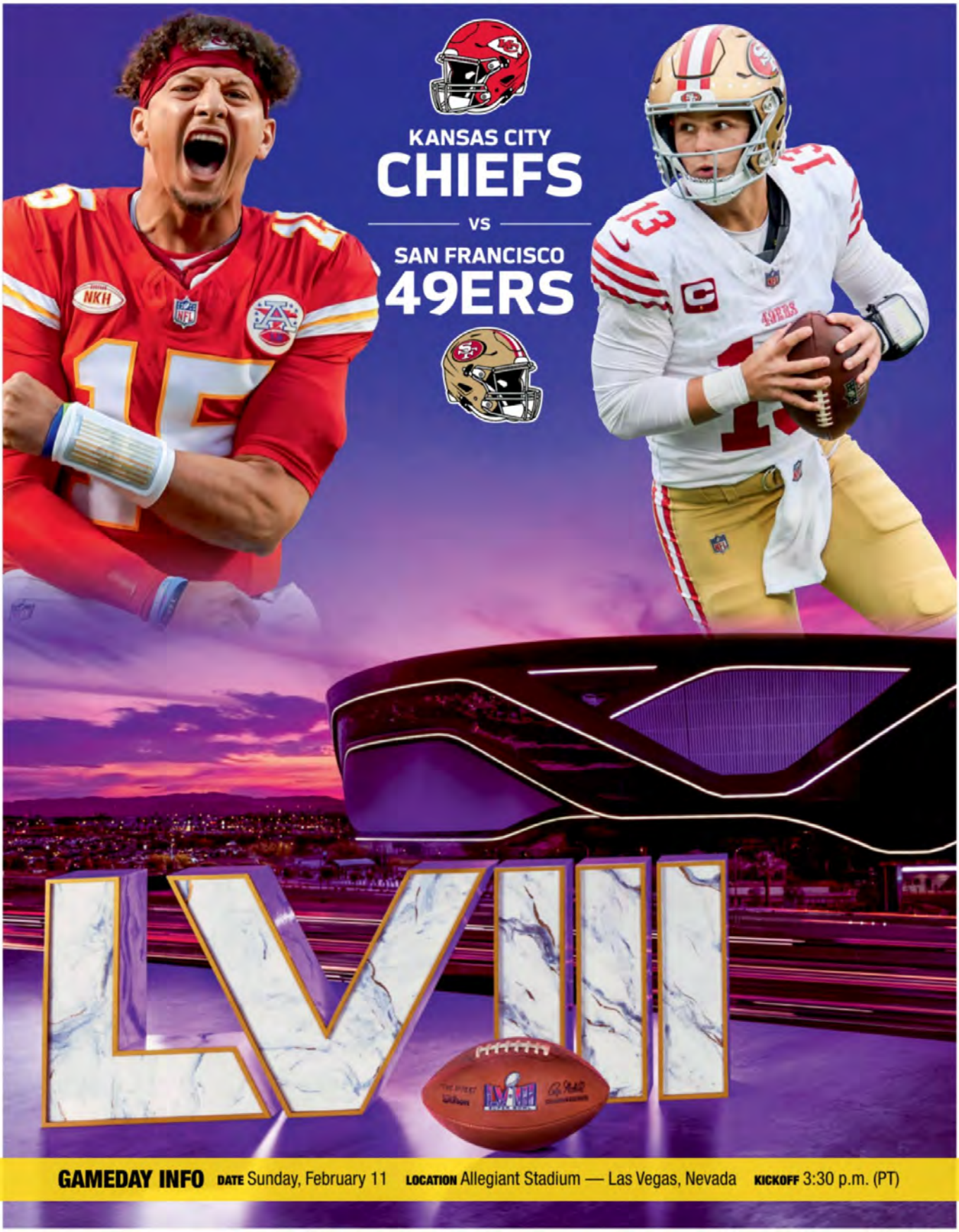

GAMEDAY INFO **DATE** Sunday, February 11 **LOCATION** Allegiant Stadium — Las Vegas, Nevada **KICKOFF** 3:30 p.m. (PT)

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AFC CHAMPIONS

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS SCOUTING REPORT

With the Chiefs' victory over Baltimore in the AFC Championship Game, Patrick Mahomes owns a 14-3 (.824) career playoff record heading into Super Bowl LVIII.

Chiefs defensive end George Karlaftis (top) has improved in all aspects of his game, going from 33 tackles and 6.0 sacks as a rookie in 2022 to 47 tackles and 10.5 sacks this season. Joe Thuney (bottom) has a well-earned reputation as one of the NFL's elite offensive guards. He was part of a unit that surrendered only 28 sacks during the regular season, second-fewest in the league.

Chiefs Again Hitting All the Right Notes

BY MICHAEL PRESTON

THESE MIGHT NOT BE the Kansas City Chiefs we've grown accustomed to seeing, but, once again, we're seeing them in the Super Bowl. It's funny how the great teams figure it out.

Instead of their success centering around a blistering offense supported by a bend-but-not-break defense, the 2023 version of the Chiefs has been much more balanced. In fact, some might argue that defense is the biggest reason why they're back in the NFL's biggest game for the fourth time in five seasons.

Kansas City fans had a 50-year wait between Super Bowl victories — from the Len Dawson-led win in Super Bowl IV to Patrick Mahomes and company rallying to upend the 49ers in Super Bowl LIV — but now the Chiefs are poised to achieve a rare feat. No team has lifted the Lombardi Trophy in back-to-back seasons since the 2003-04 Patriots.

Mahomes remains the mercurial superstar of a team he has taken to the AFC title game in each of his six seasons as the starting quarterback. He doesn't do it alone, of course. In a dog fight of a win in Buffalo in the Divisional round, he connected with, who else, tight end Travis Kelce for two touchdowns. The second was their 16th scoring combination in the playoffs, eclipsing the QB-pass-catcher record held by Tom Brady and Rob Gronkowski.

If there was any question still surrounding Mahomes, it has been answered in recent weeks. No one had seen him work his conference playoff magic away from GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium, since his first 12 non-Super Bowl postseason games were played in front of a friendly crowd. Well, here he is, two road victories later, the second of those against the top-seeded Ravens in the AFC title game.

That's brought the Chiefs to Las Vegas — a place a lot of pundits predicted they'd be on Super Bowl Sunday — but the road to get here has included some unexpected bumps. There was an opening-night home loss to the Lions, an offense that was missing its usual explosiveness for most of the year, and a December slide that saw three setbacks across four weeks.

One thing that never waned, however, was confidence. While the defense remained elite — only one team has scored more than 24 points against Kansas City all season — head coach Andy Reid simplified elements of the offense and the Chiefs doggedly won their last two regular-season games to finish 11-6 and claim the conference's No. 3 seed. They then snuffed out the challenge of the Dolphins on a

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS (14-6)
2023 RESULTS

Sep. 7	vs. LIONS	20-21	L
Sep. 17	at JAGUARS	17-9	W
Sep. 24	vs. BEARS	41-10	W
Oct. 1	at JETS	23-20	W
Oct. 8	at VIKINGS	27-20	W
Oct. 12	vs. BRONCOS	19-8	W
Oct. 22	vs. CHARGERS	31-17	W
Oct. 29	at BRONCOS	9-24	L
Nov. 5	vs. DOLPHINS*	21-14	W
Nov. 20	vs. EAGLES	17-21	L
Nov. 26	at RAIDERS	31-17	W
Dec. 3	at PACKERS	19-27	L
Dec. 10	vs. BILLS	17-20	L
Dec. 17	at PATRIOTS	27-17	W
Dec. 25	vs. RAIDERS	14-20	L
Dec. 31	vs. BENGALS	25-17	W
Jan. 7	at CHARGERS	13-12	W

*Played in Frankfurt

AFC PLAYOFFS

Jan. 13	vs. DOLPHINS	26-7	W
Jan. 21	at BILLS	27-24	W
Jan. 28	at RAVENS	17-10	W

AFC CHAMPIONS

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS SCOUTING REPORT

frigid Wild Card night in Kansas City, before proving themselves road warriors in Buffalo and Baltimore.

OFFENSE

By Chiefs standards, this season's offensive numbers were pedestrian. But, remember, these are Chiefs standards. They finished ninth in the league in total yards (351.3 yards per game) and 15th in scoring (21.8 ppg) after having led the NFL in both categories in 2022.

Yet it seemed like old times in the playoff win at Buffalo. Offensive coordinator Matt Nagy's unit attacked down the field, was essentially mistake free, and didn't punt until midway through the fourth quarter. And whenever the Bills scored, Kansas City had a counterpunch.

As Mahomes searched for new weapons during the regular season, he still threw for 27 touchdowns and 4,183 yards, sixth-best in the league, and he was again incredibly effective with his legs. He finished as the Chiefs' second-leading rusher with 389 yards.

"He's a great leader, he's a relentless guy, and he loves to give everything he has for his team," right tackle Jawaan Taylor says. "He's a great guy to play with. If guys need that extra push, he brings that."

One of those new weapons is rookie Rashee Rice, an SMU product whom the Chiefs grabbed with the No. 55 overall pick in last April's draft. Rice had impressed Mahomes while attending one of his offseason passing camps and rewarded that faith with 79 catches while leading all KC receivers in both yards (938) and touchdowns (7). His eight Wild Card receptions and 130 receiving yards show he is ready for the big stage, too.

"He's a guy who wants it," Mahomes says. "That's the biggest thing. He wants to be great. He has a chance to be a great receiver in this league, and we're going to continue to push him to be that."

Justin Watson may have finished tied for fifth on the team in receptions with 27, but

Rashee Rice (top) has enjoyed a sensational rookie campaign, making 79 catches for 938 yards. The second-round draft pick topped the Chiefs with seven TD receptions. The physical style of Isiah Pacheco (bottom) has ignited Kansas City's offense in recent weeks, both as a runner and catching passes out of the backfield.

Previous spread: JEFF LEWIS/AP IMAGES (Mahomes); PETER AIKEN/AP IMAGES (Karlaftis); REED HOFFMANN/AP IMAGES (Thurney)
This page: PETER AIKEN/AP IMAGES (Rice); REED HOFFMANN/AP IMAGES (Pacheco)

JOHN HARDY

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS SCOUTING REPORT

Only three tight ends in NFL history have more career receptions than Travis Kelce's 907: Tony Gonzalez (1,325), Jason Witten (1,228), and Antonio Gates (955). This season, Kelce led the Chiefs with 93 catches, five that went for touchdowns.

his team-leading 17.0 yards per catch shows his importance in providing a downfield target. And in any given game, Marquez Valdes-Scantling, Skyy Moore, or Kadarius Toney could find themselves the target of Mahomes' passes. They each finished with between 21 and 27 catches during the regular season.

One element that makes the Chiefs' attack so unique is the way tight ends and running backs are used in the passing game. Three of the team's top five pass-catchers weren't wide receivers. Of course, that begins with nine-time Pro Bowl selection Kelce, who had a team-best 93 receptions on the season, among them the 900th of his career. That's fourth all time among tight ends.

Fellow tight end Noah Gray, finishing his third season, is steadily becoming more of a presence. His 28 receptions ranked fourth on the team and included a pair of touchdown grabs, while his 10.9 yards per catch topped Kelce's 10.6.

Few running backs in the league bring the bone-shattering explosiveness and physical running that have become the trademarks of Isiah Pacheco. He totaled 935 rushing yards and seven touchdowns in the regular season and has provided needed energy whenever the offense has stalled. Pacheco has taken on a heavier workload since the Chiefs' bye in Week 10, and in the playoff wins over Miami and Buffalo, he combined for 39 carries, 186 yards, and two TDs. He's also a receiving threat. His 44 regular-season catches were third-most on the team.

"The one thing you're going to get from [Isiah] is he's going to go 100 miles an hour and run hard every time he gets an opportunity," Reid says. "Whether he catches or runs it, he's going hard."

When Pacheco inevitably needs to recharge his batteries, Clyde Edwards-Helaire slots in, offering a steady change up. He rushed for 223 yards and caught 17 passes.

Guard Joe Thuney and center Creed Humphrey were Pro Bowl selections from a line that allowed just 28 sacks during the regular season, second-fewest in the league. Even more impressive, Mahomes wasn't sacked a single time in the Chiefs' playoff wins vs. Miami or Buffalo. Left tackle Donovan Smith, a Super Bowl winner who spent eight seasons with Tampa Bay, right guard Trey Smith (who, along with Humphrey, didn't allow a sack in last year's Divisional round or Super Bowl), and right tackle Jawaan Taylor round out this unit.

SECOND-TO-ONE

In his remarkable seven-year career with the Chiefs, Patrick Mahomes has shredded virtually every franchise passing record, leading his team to the Super Bowl four times in that span.

Given such, you might well think Mahomes is second-to-none among NFL quarterbacks, but the truth is that he's still second-to-one when it comes to Chiefs all-time QBs. His 28,424 career passing yards and 219 touchdown passes place him 287 yards and 20 touchdowns shy of Hall of Famer Len Dawson, the legendary signal-caller who still holds the top spot among Kansas City quarterbacks.

An All-American at Purdue, Dawson played for the Pittsburgh Steelers and Cleveland Browns before joining the AFL's Dallas Texans in 1962, leading the team to that year's league championship. The following season, the Texans relocated to Kansas City and became the Chiefs, and with Dawson under center, the team quickly established itself as a powerhouse. Although the Chiefs lost Super Bowl I to the Green Bay Packers, three years later Dawson led his team to a dominant 23-7 win over the NFL's Minnesota Vikings in Super Bowl IV, earning game MVP honors for his play. It was a win that put the leagues

Len Dawson

on equal footing in the minds of fans, ahead of the merger the following season.

In his 14-year career with the Chiefs, Dawson led the league in completion percentage in six consecutive seasons and was a seven-time Pro Bowl selection on his way to Pro Football Hall of Fame enshrinement in 1987.

Another part of Dawson's legacy is as one of the NFL's first crossover stars. In 1966, he was named sports director at Kansas City's KMBC-TV, a position he held for more than four decades. And from 1977-2001, he hosted HBO's weekly show *Inside the NFL*. He was also an analyst on NBC's NFL telecasts for six years and spent 35 seasons as the color commentator on Chiefs radio broadcasts. That work was recognized in 2012 when Dawson received the prestigious Pete Rozelle Radio-TV Award from the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He passed away in August 2022 at the age of 87. — ***Mark Preston***

Mark Preston is a Connecticut-based sportswriter who has contributed to the Official Super Bowl Program *for the past 17 years.*

PETER ARENYP IMAGES (Kelce); WILLIAM P. STRATTER/AP IMAGES (Dawson)

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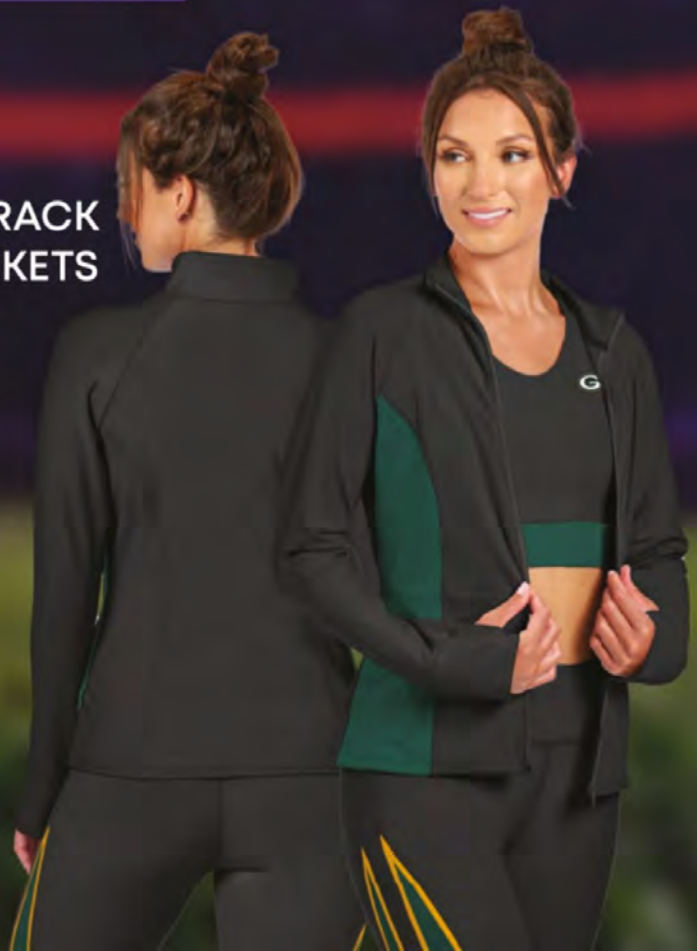

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS SCOUTING REPORT

DEFENSE

If we're being completely honest, the Chiefs wouldn't be playing for the Lombardi Trophy if not for their defense, which — opponents be warned — is the youngest in the NFL, with an average age of 25 years old. Kansas City trailed only the Ravens in fewest points (17.3) and the Browns in yards allowed (289.8) per game during the regular season.

The effectiveness of the blitz and the affection coordinator Steve Spagnuolo has for pressuring the quarterback earned the Chiefs the second-most sacks in the league (57.0). It's not a new trend; last year's team also ranked second, with 55.0 sacks.

The main wrecking ball in the pass rush is defensive tackle Chris Jones, who is disruptive every week. He had 10.5 sacks, pushing his career total to 75.5, and played his way to a fifth straight Pro Bowl honor. Jones missed the preseason and the opener but was in uniform for Week 2 and did what he does best, producing 1.5 sacks, two pressures, and a pass batted down in a hard-fought win over Jacksonville.

"I mean, Chris, crazy," Mahomes said after the 17-9 victory. "Just to be able to make that impact on a game after not being in training camp, it's special. I'm glad he's on my team."

Ends George Karlaftis and Mike Danna are equally relentless as the Chiefs fashion one of the NFL's most potent defensive fronts.

Karlaftis has posted the third-most sacks in a player's first two seasons in franchise history, equaling Jones' haul of 10.5 this campaign and claiming another 1.5 in the forbidding temperatures of the Wild Card round. The Chiefs have relied heavily on Danna since losing key starters on the line to free agency, and he delivered with 6.5 sacks. Seven more sacks came from defensive end Charles Omenihu.

"One thing you're going to get with them is 110 percent every snap," Reid says. "There's no plays off with those [guys]."

Linebacker Nick Bolton, sidelined for eight games with various injuries, still accounted for 60 tackles, one interception, and three passes defensed, and impressed sufficiently to be named a Pro Bowl alternate. Fellow starter Willie Gay was similarly recognized after a solid campaign that saw him collect 58 tackles, defense four passes, and recover three fumbles. Leo Chenal came to the fore as a major force stopping the run and was the team's seventh-leading tackler (57) during a breakout season.

Another important part of this group is linebacker Drue Tranquill. A free-agent addition after four seasons with the Chargers, his 79 tackles and 4.5 sacks led all Chiefs LBs, and his presence has eased the need for Bolton to play every down.

The Chiefs boast a pair of aggressive corners who are among the best in the NFL. L'Jarius Sneed did not allow a touchdown when targeted this season until late in the Divisional round against Buffalo. He also led the team with 14 passes defended and drew the assignment of

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
ALL-TIME PLAYOFF RESULTS
(23 WINS, 21 LOSSES; 3 SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONSHIPS)

YEAR	ROUND	OPPONENT	SCORE	W/L
1962	AFL Championship	at Houston Oilers	20-17 (2OT)	W
	(Won as Dallas Texans, moved to Kansas City in 1963)			
1966	AFL Championship	at Bills	31-7	W
	Super Bowl I	**Packers**	**10-35**	L
1968	AFL Divisional	at Oakland Raiders	6-41	L
1969	AFL Divisional	at Jets	13-6	W
	AFL Championship	at Oakland Raiders	17-7	W
	Super Bowl IV	**Vikings**	**23-7**	W
1971	AFC Divisional	vs. Dolphins	24-27 (2OT)	L
1986	AFC Wild Card	at Jets	15-35	L
1990	AFC Wild Card	at Dolphins	16-17	L
1991	AFC Wild Card	vs. Los Angeles Raiders	10-6	W
	AFC Divisional	at Bills	14-37	L
1992	AFC Wild Card	at San Diego Chargers	0-17	L
1993	AFC Wild Card	vs. Steelers	27-24 (OT)	W
	AFC Divisional	at Houston Oilers	28-20	W
	AFC Championship	at Bills	13-30	L
1994	AFC Wild Card	at Dolphins	17-27	L
1995	AFC Divisional	vs. Colts	7-10	L
1997	AFC Divisional	vs. Broncos	10-14	L
2003	AFC Divisional	vs. Colts	31-38	L
2006	AFC Wild Card	at Colts	8-23	L
2010	AFC Wild Card	vs. Ravens	7-30	L
2013	AFC Wild Card	at Colts	44-45	L
2015	AFC Wild Card	at Texans	30-0	W
	AFC Divisional	at Patriots	20-27	L
2016	AFC Divisional	vs. Steelers	16-18	L
2017	AFC Wild Card	vs. Titans	21-22	L
2018	AFC Divisional	vs. Colts	31-13	W
	AFC Championship	vs. Patriots	31-37 (OT)	L
2019	AFC Divisional	vs. Texans	51-31	W
	AFC Championship	vs. Titans	35-24	W
	Super Bowl LIV	**49ers**	**31-20**	W
2020	AFC Divisional	vs. Browns	22-17	W
	AFC Championship	vs. Bills	38-24	W
	Super Bowl LV	**Buccaneers**	**9-31**	L
2021	AFC Wild Card	vs. Steelers	42-21	W
	AFC Divisional	vs. Bills	42-36 (OT)	W
	AFC Championship	vs. Bengals	24-27 (OT)	L
2022	AFC Divisional	vs. Jaguars	27-20	W
	AFC Championship	vs. Bengals	23-20	W
	Super Bowl LVII	**Eagles**	**38-35**	W
2023	AFC Wild Card	vs. Dolphins	26-7	W
	AFC Divisional	at Bills	27-24	W
	AFC Championship	at Ravens	17-10	W

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KANSAS CITY CHIEFS SCOUTING REPORT

covering Tyreek Hill, Stefon Diggs, and Zay Flowers during the conference playoffs.

Trent McDuffie was the team's second-leading tackler (80) and tied for third in the NFL with five forced fumbles. Add hard-hitting Jaylen Watson to the rotation and it's easy to see why the defensive backfield gave up the fourth-fewest yards to receivers.

At safety, Justin Reid came out on top of the pack with 95 tackles and 3.0 sacks and is the veteran leader of a young secondary alongside Mike Edwards, who took a fumble recovery 97 yards to the house to set the tone in a crucial late-season win over the Chargers. Edwards also had a quick-thinking lateral during the team's Week 9 win over the Dolphins that enabled a 59-yard fumble-return touchdown by Bryan Cook. When an ankle injury sidelined Cook two weeks later, it opened the door for rookie defensive back Chamarri Conner to gain experience.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Harrison Butker continues to be consistent and clutch, even in the roughest conditions. He kicked four field goals in the brutally cold Wild Card win over Miami, hit from 47 and 29 yards despite a swirling wind at Buffalo's Highmark Stadium, and was good from 52 yards in the rain at Baltimore.

The seventh-year kicker's season was perfect until Week 15, and he has missed only two field goals all year, playoffs included. He's now gone 6-of-6 on attempts of 50+ yards, which includes a 60-yarder in a Week 6 win over Denver.

Tommy Townsend remains one of the steadiest punters across the NFL. He averaged 47.1 yards per attempt and, equally important, had just five touchbacks on his 59 punts. He also continued an unusual streak of throwing a pass on a fake punt in each of the last four seasons. Impressively, he has connected on three of those attempts.

Richie James is the primary punt and kickoff returner — averaging 10.0 yards and 20.8 yards, respectively — though Toney and Mecole Hardman have been stationed back there as well.

Long snapper James Winchester is the second-longest tenured player on the Chiefs, his time in Kansas City dating back to 2015.

[AFC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME]

CHIEFS 17 « FINAL RAVENS 10

Sticking with a formula that has worked all season, the Chiefs banked on their defense for big plays while holding off the Ravens to reach their fourth Super Bowl in five years and sixth in franchise history.

Kansas City's offense made its presence felt early, scoring touchdowns on its first two possessions and adding a field goal just before halftime.

QB Patrick Mahomes put the Chiefs on the board first with a 19-yard TD pass to Travis Kelce. After the Ravens tied things up, he engineered a drive that took more than nine minutes off the clock and ended with Isiah Pacheco's 2-yard TD run.

Later in the second quarter, Kelce caught his 152nd postseason pass, breaking Jerry Rice's NFL career record.

It was all about the defense in the second half. The Chiefs ended one Ravens threat when cornerback L'Jarius Sneed punched the ball out from receiver Zay Flowers shy of the goal line. KC's Trent McDuffie recovered. Baltimore later reached the Kansas City 25-yard line before safety Deon Bush intercepted a pass in the end zone.

Mahomes completed 30 of 39 passes for 241 yards. Kelce had a game-high 11 receptions.

CHAMPIONSHIP

M&T BANK STADIUM
Baltimore, Md. January 28, 2024

	1	2	3	4	F
#3 **Chiefs**	7	10	0	0	**17**
#1 Ravens	7	0	0	3	10

1st Quarter

KC Mahomes 19-yard pass to Kelce (Butker kick), 7:46
BAL Jackson 30-yard pass to Flowers (Tucker kick), 5:09

2nd Quarter

KC Pacheco 2-yard run (Butker kick), 10:59
KC Butker 52-yard FG, 0:08

4th Quarter

BAL Tucker 43-yard FG, 2:38

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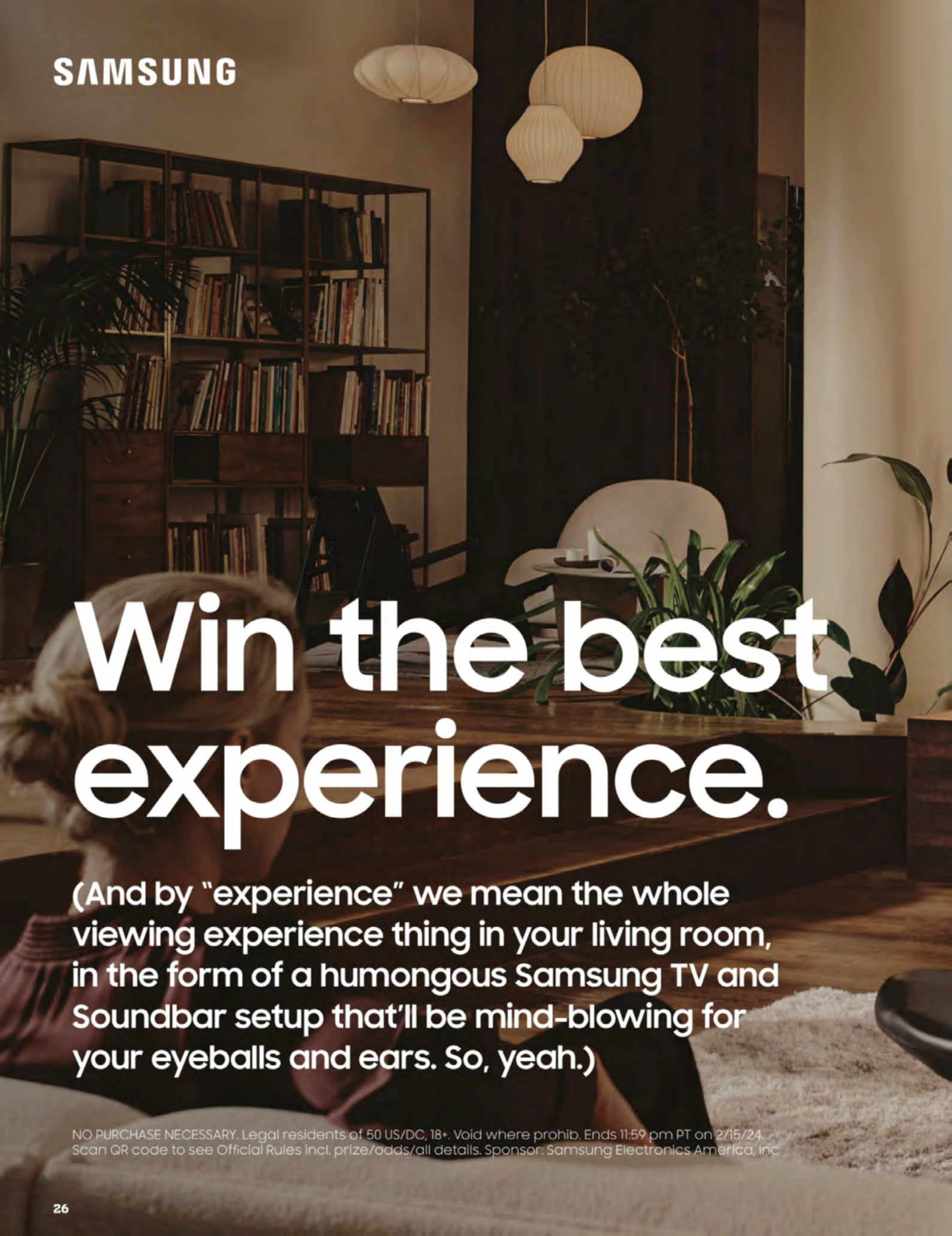
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KANSAS CITY CHIEFS SCOUTING REPORT

L'Jarius Sneed (above) has developed into a shutdown cornerback during his four NFL seasons, making the Chiefs one of the toughest teams against the pass. His 2023 stats included 78 tackles, two interceptions, and 14 passes defensed. Relentless in his pursuit of the quarterback, Chris Jones (right) posted another double-digit sack season, collecting 10.5 to push his career total to 75.5 sacks.

GAME PLAN

At first glance, one would think that for the Chiefs to take home another Lombardi Trophy, they simply need to put the game in the hands of Mahomes — and that's partially true. Throughout his career, he's delivered in the clutch.

Moreover, his connection with Kelce continues to set records, and they seem more in sync than at any point this season. Whether the plan is to get the ball to Kelce early to open up routes for the wide receivers, or vice-versa, you can be certain the two of them will be dialing up something whenever the Chiefs need a big play.

Rookie receiver Rice provides another outlet, and when he produces, the whole offense clicks. Seeing Valdes-Scantling step up in the Divisional round suggests he is going to be a viable target, as well, if the defense keys in on Kelce or when the blitz flushes Mahomes out into the open.

Then there's Pacheco and his aggressive running style that can wear down a defense. When there are yards to be covered and first downs to be made, no matter how determined the barriers put in his path, the former seventh-round draft pick is fearless in battering his way through.

Yet, even with all that potential explosiveness, the Chiefs have a fallback plan that hasn't been available to them in recent Super Bowl trips. This year's defense — from the front line to the secondary — is so skilled and aggressive that it's difficult to imagine any offense having sustained success against them. And that flips the script. Instead of the Chiefs' defense needing to make just enough stops for the offense to do its thing, this time it could be the offense putting just enough points on the board for the Kansas City defense to secure victory.

What that would ultimately prove is Super Bowl championships can come in many forms — even for Kansas City.

Michael Preston is a freelance writer and communications consultant based in New Orleans. He has worked 21 Super Bowls as a member of the NFL public relations staff.

PETER AIKEN/AP IMAGES (Sneed); WINSLOW TOWNSON/AP IMAGES (Jones)

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Clark Hunt

CHAIRMAN AND CEO

CLARK HUNT has been involved in the leadership of the Kansas City Chiefs for nearly two decades and currently serves as the club's Chairman and CEO.

Hunt has been the driving force behind the resurgence of the Chiefs, transforming the iconic franchise into one of the most successful teams in the NFL. The Chiefs have earned nine AFC West Division championships and 11 playoff appearances since Hunt took over as CEO in 2010.

Last month, Hunt hoisted the award that bears his father's name — the Lamar Hunt Trophy — for the fourth time in five years. The franchise is making its sixth Super Bowl appearance.

In January 2013, Hunt modified the leadership structure of the organization, announcing that for the first time in club history, the head coach, general manager, and team president would all report directly to the Chairman and CEO. Hunt hired head coach Andy Reid in 2013, and in 11 seasons under Reid, the Chiefs have 128 regular-season victories, the most in the NFL during that span.

In addition to the on-field resurgence of the team, Hunt is a leading voice among NFL owners. In 2019, he was named chairman of the influential NFL Finance Committee after serving as a member for seven years. He also serves on the Personal Conduct Committee and the Management Council Executive Committee (CEC), where he was instrumental in securing the NFL's last two collective bargaining agreements in 2011 and 2020.

Hunt is a member and former chairman of the NFL International Committee and an advocate for expanding the league's international efforts. The league significantly grew its global footprint under his chairmanship (2011-18). Since 2011, the league has hosted 43 regular-season games internationally and, through the Global Markets Program, awarded International Home Marketing Area rights for 14 different countries to 21 different teams, further expanding the NFL brand. The Chiefs played their third regular-season international game during the 2023 season in Frankfurt, Germany, defeating the Dolphins, 21-14.

Hunt's leadership has elevated Kansas City as a sports destination. The city hosted the 2023 NFL Draft, with more than 312,000 fans in attendance, and is now preparing to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup — with GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium serving as a match site.

Hunt graduated first in his class at Southern Methodist University in 1987, earning a degree in business administration with a concentration in finance. He received the SMU Distinguished Alumni Award in 2020, and he currently serves on the SMU Board of Trustees.

He and his wife, Tavia, are actively involved in numerous philanthropic initiatives in both Kansas City and Dallas. One of the Hunt family's lasting legacies is the Chiefs Charity Game, which has raised more than $15.1 million for local youth-focused charities since its inception in 1985.

The Hunts have three children: Gracie, Knobel, and Ava.

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS TEAM OFFICIALS

Clark Hunt
Chairman and CEO

Mark Donovan
President

Brett Veach
General Manager

Mike Borgonzi
Assistant General Manager

Brandt Tilis
Vice President of Football Operations

Chris Shea
Vice President of Football Operations/ Team Counsel

Mike Bradway
Senior Director of Player Personnel

Ryne Nutt
Director of Player Personnel/College Scouting

Tim Terry
Director of Player Personnel/Pro Scouting

Willie Davis
Senior Personnel Executive

David Hinson
Co-Director of College Scouting

Pat Sperduto
Co-Director of College Scouting

Terry Delp
Senior College Scouting Executive

Rick Burkholder
Vice President of Sports Medicine and Performance

Dan Crumb
Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Lara Krug
Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer

Ted Crews
Executive Vice President of Communications

Matt Kenny
Executive Vice President of Arrowhead Operations and Events

Tyler Kirby
Executive Vice President of Business Development

Kirsten Krug
Executive Vice President of Administration

Robert Alberino Jr.
Vice President of Content and Production

Kellen Begnoche
Vice President of Partnership Strategy

Nick Capo
Vice President of Event Operations

Brian Dunn
Vice President of Accounting and Controller

Brad Gee
Vice President of Football Communications

Brandon Hamilton
Vice President of Stadium Operations and Facilities

Kevin Higgins
Vice President of Information Technology/CISO

Kimberly Hobbs
Vice President of Partnership Strategy and Development

Neale Hood
Vice President of Corporate Partnership Development

Jayne Martin
Vice President of Fan Experience

Michael Ragsdale
Vice President of Finance, Strategy, and Analytics

Anne Scharf
Vice President of Community Impact and Civic Affairs

Jeremy Slavens
Vice President of Arrowhead Events

Dr. Shaun Tyrance
Vice President of Player Services and Assessment

Brian Shafar
Senior Director of Team Security

Luke Shanno
Senior Director of Corporate Communications

Pat Brazil
Director of Video Operations

Cydney Glaze
Director of Communications and Administration

Mitch Reynolds
Director of Team Operations

Ramzee Robinson
Director of Player Engagement

Allen Wright
Equipment Director

Chuck Castellano
Senior Director of Community Outreach

Jennifer Jones
Senior Director of Brand Strategy and Fan Development

Anthony Matthies
Senior Director of Premium Sales

Justin Sauser
Senior Director of Ticket Sales and Operations

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Andy Reid

HEAD COACH

Chiefs head coach **ANDY REID** is in his 32nd NFL season, 25th as a head coach, and 11th with the Chiefs. Under Reid, Kansas City has made the playoffs 10 times and has won a franchise-record eight consecutive AFC West titles. With 128 regular-season wins, Reid is the winningest coach in franchise history and is the only head coach in NFL history to be the winningest coach of two different franchises (Eagles).

Reid led the 2022 Chiefs to a 14-3 season before finishing the job in Super Bowl LVII with a 38-35 victory over the Eagles. In 2020, Kansas City posted a franchise-best 14-2 record, and a year earlier, the Chiefs went 12-4 and won their first Super Bowl title in 50 years by rallying to defeat the 49ers in Super Bowl LIV.

Prior to joining the Chiefs, Reid led the Eagles to a 130-93-1 (.583) regular-season record and five trips to the NFC Championship Game.

A tackle/guard at Brigham Young University from 1979-81, Reid coached at his alma mater and several other colleges before moving on to the NFL.

ASSISTANT COACHES

Dave Toub
Assistant Head Coach/Special Teams Coordinator

Matt Nagy
Offensive Coordinator

Steve Spagnuolo
Defensive Coordinator

Joe Bleymaier
Pass Game Coordinator

Terry Bradden
Assistant Defensive Line

Greg Carbin
Assistant Strength and Conditioning

Nick Cassetta
Assistant Strength and Conditioning

Joe Cullen
Defensive Line

Donald D'Alesio
Safeties

Brendan Daly
Linebackers

Porter Ellett
Assistant Running Backs

Connor Embree
Wide Receivers

Ken Flajole
Outside Linebackers

Mike Frazier
Statistical Analysis Coordinator

David Girardi
Quarterbacks

Andy Heck
Offensive Line

Andy Hill
Assistant Special Teams

Corey Matthaei
Assistant Offensive Line

Tom Melvin
Tight Ends

Dave Merritt
Defensive Backs

Todd Pinkston
Running Backs

Spencer Reid
Assistant Strength and Conditioning

Ryan Reynolds
Head Strength and Condtioning/Director of Sports Science

Kevin Saxton
Offensive Assistant

Marc Richards
Football Research Analyst

Alex Whittingham
Defensive Quality Control

Dan Williams
Offensive Quality Control/ Assistant Quarterbacks

Rod Wilson
Defensive Assistant

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
NUMERICAL ROSTER

NO	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	BIRTH DATE	NFL EXP	COLLEGE	HOW ACQUIRED
2	Joshua Williams	CB	6-3	193	10/17/99	2	Fayetteville State	D4 '22
4	Rashee Rice	WR	6-1	204	4/22/00	R	SMU	D2 '23
5	Tommy Townsend	P	6-1	191	11/12/96	4	Florida	CFA '20
7	Harrison Butker	K	6-4	205	7/14/95	7	Georgia Tech	FA '17
8	Justyn Ross	WR	6-4	210	12/15/99	2	Clemson	CFA '22
9	Blaine Gabbert	QB	6-5	235	10/15/89	12	Missouri	FA '23
10	Isiah Pacheco	RB	5-10	216	3/2/99	2	Rutgers	D7b '22
11	Marquez Valdes-Scantling	WR	6-4	206	10/10/94	6	South Florida	FA '22
12	Mecole Hardman	WR	5-10	187	3/12/98	5	Georgia	T (NYJ) '23
15	Patrick Mahomes	QB	6-2	225	9/17/95	7	Texas Tech	D1 '17
17	Richie James	WR	5-9	185	9/5/95	6	Middle Tennessee State	FA '23
19	Kadarius Toney	WR	6-0	193	1/27/99	3	Florida	T (NYG) '22
20	Justin Reid	S	6-1	207	2/15/97	6	Stanford	FA '22
21	Mike Edwards	S	5-10	205	5/18/96	5	Kentucky	FA '23
22	Trent McDuffie	CB	5-11	193	9/13/00	2	Washington	D1a '22
23	Drue Tranquill	LB	6-2	234	8/15/95	5	Notre Dame	FA '23
25	Clyde Edwards-Helaire	RB	5-7	207	4/11/99	4	LSU	D1 '20
26	Deon Bush	S	6-0	200	8/14/93	8	Miami (FL)	FA '22
27	Chamarri Conner	DB	6-0	202	7/11/00	R	Virginia Tech	D4 '23
29	La'Mical Perine	RB	5-11	216	1/30/98	2	Florida	FA '22
31	Nic Jones	CB	6-0	189	10/15/01	R	Ball State	D7 '23
32	Nick Bolton	LB	5-11	237	3/10/00	3	Missouri	D2a '21
35	Jaylen Watson	CB	6-2	197	9/17/98	2	Washington State	D7a '22
38	L'Jarius Sneed	CB	6-1	192	1/21/97	4	Lousiana Tech	D4 '20
40	Ekow Boye-Doe	CB	6-0	177	11/4/99	R	Kansas State	FA '23
41	James Winchester	LS	6-3	209	8/6/89	9	Oklahoma	FA '15
43	Jack Cochrane	LB	6-3	236	2/9/99	2	South Dakota	CFA '22
48	Cole Christiansen	LB	6-1	230	7/30/97	1	Army	FA '22
50	Willie Gay	LB	6-1	243	2/15/98	4	Mississippi State	D2 '20
51	Mike Danna	DE	6-2	257	12/4/97	4	Michigan	D5 '20
52	Creed Humphrey	C	6-4	302	6/28/98	3	Oklahoma	D2b '21
53	BJ Thompson	DE	6-6	243	3/23/99	R	Stephen F. Austin	D5 '23
54	Leo Chenal	LB	6-3	250	10/26/00	2	Wisconsin	D3 '22
56	George Karlaftis	DE	6-4	263	4/3/01	2	Purdue	D1b '22
59	Darius Harris	LB	6-2	232	1/17/96	4	Middle Tennessee State	FA '23
62	Joe Thuney	G	6-5	304	11/18/92	8	North Carolina State	FA '21
64	Wanya Morris	OL	6-6	307	10/10/00	R	Oklahoma	D3 '23
65	Trey Smith	G	6-6	321	6/16/99	3	Tennessee	D6 '21
66	Mike Caliendo	OL	6-4	301	10/21/97	1	Western Michigan	CFA '22
73	Nick Allegretti	G	6-4	310	4/21/96	5	Illinois	D7 '19
74	Jawaan Taylor	T	6-5	330	11/25/97	5	Florida	FA '23
77	Lucas Niang	T	6-6	315	8/18/98	3	TCU	D3 '20
79	Donovan Smith	T	6-6	338	6/23/93	9	Penn State	FA '23
81	Blake Bell	TE	6-6	252	8/7/91	9	Oklahoma	FA '21
83	Noah Gray	TE	6-3	240	4/30/99	3	Duke	D5a '21
84	Justin Watson	WR	6-2	215	4/4/96	6	Pennsylvania	FA '22
87	Travis Kelce	TE	6-5	250	10/5/89	11	Cincinnati	D3a '13
90	Charles Omenihu	DE	6-5	280	8/20/97	5	Texas	FA '23
92	Neil Farrell	DT	6-4	325	9/9/98	2	LSU	T (LV) '23
94	Malik Herring	DE	6-3	275	11/9/97	3	Georgia	CFA '21
95	Chris Jones	DT	6-6	310	7/3/94	8	Mississippi State	D2 '16
97	Felix Anudike-Uzomah	DE	6-4	255	1/24/02	R	Kansas State	D1 '23
98	Tershawn Wharton	DT	6-1	280	6/25/98	4	Missouri S&T	CFA '20

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AFC CHAMPIONS

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS SCOUTING REPORT

Nick Allegretti (73)
GUARD

Felix Anudike-Uzomah (97)
DEFENSIVE END

Blake Bell (81)
TIGHT END

Nick Bolton (32)
LINEBACKER

Ekow Boye-Doe (40)
CORNERBACK

Deon Bush (26)
SAFETY

Harrison Butker (7)
KICKER

Mike Caliendo (66)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Leo Chenal (54)
LINEBACKER

Cole Christiansen (48)
LINEBACKER

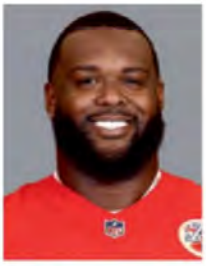
Jack Cochrane (43)
LINEBACKER

Chamarri Conner (27)
DEFENSIVE BACK

Mike Danna (51)
DEFENSIVE END

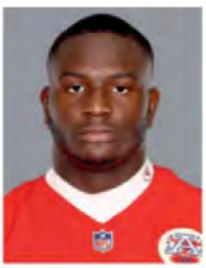
Mike Edwards (21)
SAFETY

Clyde Edwards-Helaire (25)
RUNNING BACK



Neil Farrell (92)
DEFENSIVE TACKLE

Blaine Gabbert (9)
QUARTERBACK



Willie Gay (50)
LINEBACKER

Noah Gray (83)
TIGHT END

Mecole Hardman (12)
WIDE RECEIVER

Darius Harris (59)
LINEBACKER

Malik Herring (94)
DEFENSIVE END

Creed Humphrey (52)
CENTER

Richie James (17)
WIDE RECEIVER

Chris Jones (95)
DEFENSIVE TACKLE

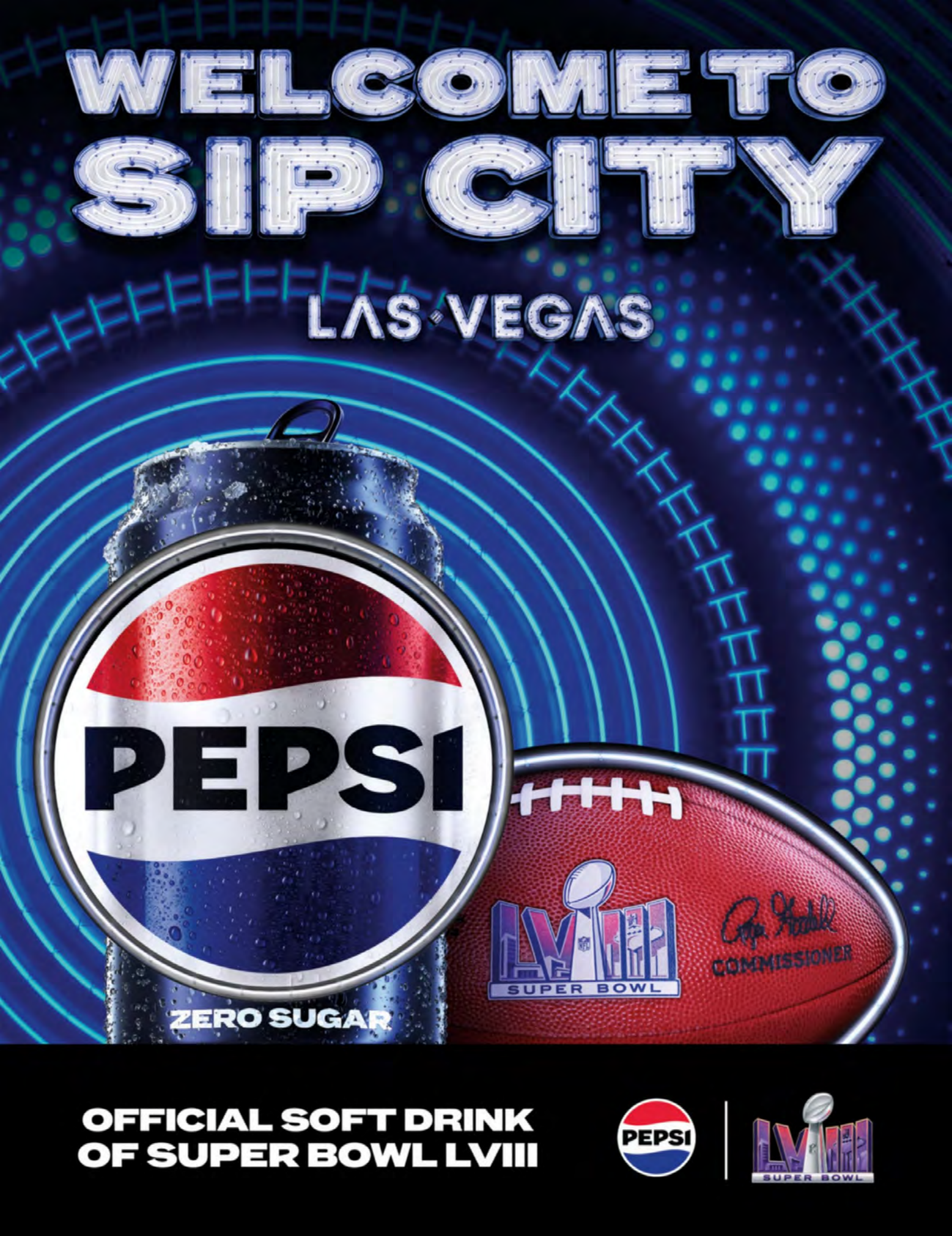
Nic Jones (31)
CORNERBACK

George Karlaftis (56)
DEFENSIVE END

Travis Kelce (87)
TIGHT END

Patrick Mahomes (15)
QUARTERBACK

Trent McDuffie (22)
CORNERBACK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AFC CHAMPIONS

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS SCOUTING REPORT

Wanya Morris (64)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Lucas Niang (77)
TACKLE

Charles Omenihu (90)
DEFENSIVE END

Isiah Pacheco (10)
RUNNING BACK

La'Mical Perine (29)
RUNNING BACK

Justin Reid (20)
SAFETY

Rashee Rice (4)
WIDE RECEIVER

Justyn Ross (8)
WIDE RECEIVER

Donovan Smith (79)
TACKLE

Trey Smith (65)
GUARD

L'Jarius Sneed (38)
CORNERBACK

Jawaan Taylor (74)
TACKLE

BJ Thompson (53)
DEFENSIVE END

Joe Thuney (62)
GUARD

Kadarius Toney (19)
WIDE RECEIVER

Tommy Townsend (5)
PUNTER

Drue Tranquill (23)
LINEBACKER

Marquez Valdes-Scantling (11)
WIDE RECEIVER

Jaylen Watson (35)
CORNERBACK

Justin Watson (84)
WIDE RECEIVER

Tershawn Wharton (98)
DEFENSIVE TACKLE

Joshua Williams (2)
CORNERBACK

James Winchester (41)
LONG SNAPPER

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KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
STATISTICAL LEADERS/DEPTH CHARTS

OFFENSE

	PASSING					
	COMP-ATT	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	RTNG
Patrick Mahomes	401-597	67.2	4183	27	14	92.6

	RUSHING				
	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Isiah Pacheco	205	935	4.6	48	7
Patrick Mahomes	75	389	5.2	25	0
Clyde Edwards-Helaire	70	223	3.2	20	1

	RECEIVING				
	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Travis Kelce	93	984	10.6	53	5
Rashee Rice	79	938	11.9	67	7
Isiah Pacheco	44	244	5.5	33	2
Noah Gray	28	305	10.9	34	2
Justin Watson	27	460	17.0	41	3
Kadarius Toney	27	169	6.3	18	1
Jerick McKinnon	25	192	7.7	27	4
Marquez Valdes-Scantling	21	315	15.0	46	1
Skyy Moore	21	244	11.6	54	1

DEPTH CHART

WR	4	Rashee Rice
	12	Mecole Hardman
	8	Justyn Ross
LT	79	Donovan Smith
	64	Wanya Morris
LG	62	Joe Thuney
	66	Mike Caliendo
C	52	Creed Humphrey
	73	Nick Allegretti
RG	65	Trey Smith
	73	Nick Allegretti
RT	74	Jawaan Taylor
	77	Lucas Niang
TE	87	Travis Kelce
	83	Noah Gray
	81	Blake Bell
WR	11	Marquez Valdes-Scantling
	84	Justin Watson
WR	19	Kadarius Toney
	17	Richie James
QB	15	Patrick Mahomes
	9	Blaine Gabbert
RB	10	Isiah Pacheco
	25	Clyde Edwards-Helaire
	29	La'Mical Perine

DEFENSE

	TACKLES		
	SOLO	ASSISTS	TOTAL
Justin Reid	74	21	95
Trent McDuffie	60	20	80
Drue Tranquill	54	25	79
L'Jarius Sneed	60	18	78
Nick Bolton	38	22	60
Willie Gay	44	14	58
Leo Chenal	35	22	57
Mike Edwards	32	19	51
Mike Danna	32	18	50
George Karlaftis	29	18	47

	INTERCEPTIONS				
	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
L'Jarius Sneed	2	4	2.0	4	0

(Nick Bolton, Chamarri Conner, Bryan Cook, Mike Edwards, Willie Gay, Justin Reid tied with 1 each)

	SACKS	
	NO	YDS
Chris Jones	10.5	71.5
George Karlaftis	10.5	55.5
Charles Omenihu	7.0	49.0
Mike Danna	6.5	34.0
Drue Tranquill	4.5	19.0
Trent McDuffie	3.0	24.0
Leo Chenal	3.0	17.0
Justin Reid	3.0	16.0

	PASSES DEFENSED	FORCED FUMBLES/ RECOVERIES
L'Jarius Sneed	14	0/1
Trent McDuffie	7	5/0
Justin Reid	7	1/0
Jaylen Watson	6	0/0
Mike Edwards	5	0/2
Joshua Williams	5	0/0

DEPTH CHART

DE	56	George Karlaftis
	97	Felix Anudike-Uzomah
	53	BJ Thompson
DT	98	Tershawn Wharton
	92	Neil Farrell
DT	95	Chris Jones
	98	Tershawn Wharton
DE	51	Mike Danna
	90	Charles Omenihu
	94	Malik Herring
LB	50	Willie Gay
	59	Darius Harris
	48	Cole Christiansen
LB	32	Nick Bolton
	23	Drue Tranquill
LB	54	Leo Chenal
	43	Jack Cochrane
CB	22	Trent McDuffie
	2	Joshua Williams
	40	Ekow Boye-Doe
CB	38	L'Jarius Sneed
	35	Jaylen Watson
	31	Nic Jones
S	20	Justin Reid
	27	Chamarri Conner
S	21	Mike Edwards
	26	Deon Bush

SPECIAL TEAMS

	FIELD GOALS					
	TOTAL	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Harrison Butker	33/35	0/0	8/8	13/15	7/7	5/5

	KICK RETURNS				
	RET	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Richie James	9	187	20.8	31	0

	PUNT RETURNS				
	RET	FC	AVG	LONG	TD
Richie James	20	8	10.0	27	0

	PUNTING					
	NO	AVG	NET	TCHBK	IN/20	LONG
Tommy Townsend	59	47.1	41.8	5	20	68

DEPTH CHART

P	5	Tommy Townsend
K	7	Harrison Butker
H	5	Tommy Townsend
LS	41	James Winchester
PR	19	Kadarius Toney
	17	Richie James
KR	17	Richie James
	19	Kadarius Toney

NFC CHAMPIONS

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS SCOUTING REPORT

Brock Purdy, after turning heads when he stepped into a starting role in 2022, has kept everyone's attention this season, leading the NFL with a 113.0 passer rating.

Dre Greenlaw (top), one of the NFL's elite linebackers, has recorded at least 120 tackles each of the last two seasons. In his fifth season with the 49ers, Mitch Wishnowsky (bottom) set career highs for gross punting average (47.7 yards) and net average (42.7).

These 49ers Have a Sixth Sense

BY CRAIG ELLENPORT

JOE MONTANA. STEVE YOUNG. ... And Brock Purdy? A pair of Hall of Fame quarterbacks led the San Francisco 49ers to their first five Super Bowl championships, and now Purdy has a chance to become one of the more unlikely field generals to hoist the Lombardi Trophy.

If he's successful, San Francisco will join the Patriots and Steelers as the only teams to capture six Super Bowl titles.

With an appearance in Super Bowl LIV and trips to the NFC Championship Game each of the last three seasons, the 49ers are solidly positioned as one of the NFL's top teams. But they're still chasing their first Super Bowl ring since the 1994 season. Yet, this year's team — after a 12-5 regular season that earned them the conference's top seed and set the stage for home postseason wins over the Packers and Lions — looks poised to seal the deal.

Kyle Shanahan, in his seventh season as 49ers head coach, is 7-3 in the postseason. When he led San Francisco to Super Bowl LIV, he and his father, Mike Shanahan, entered the record books as the NFL's first-ever father-son duo to take teams to the Super Bowl. Mike Shanahan won back-to-back titles with John Elway and the Denver Broncos. A 49ers win in Super Bowl LVIII would make them the first father-son head coach tandem with rings.

Another connection between father and son: Former NFL receiver Ed McCaffrey played for Mike's Broncos. Running back Christian McCaffrey, Ed's son, is one of Kyle's many elite offensive threats. Credit San Francisco general manager John Lynch for adding one of the league's most versatile offensive weapons in a trade with the Panthers prior to Week 7 of the 2022 season. Lynch made another big deal this season, this time addressing his defense, when he acquired defensive end Chase Young from the Commanders.

Lynch, who was enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2021 for his playing career (predominantly with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers), is making a case for being equally deserving of Canton as an executive. He has built an elite roster through the draft, trades, and free-agent signings, and he's developed a culture around the organization that mixes toughness with a will to win.

"There were people who had questions with John when he took the position," says FOX analyst Howie Long. "I think he's done an amazing job. If you get drafted by John Lynch, you're gonna be a couple of things: You're gonna be tough, and you're going to be passionate about the game.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS (14-5)
2023 RESULTS

Sep. 10	at STEELERS	30-7	W
Sep. 17	at RAMS	30-23	W
Sep. 21	vs. GIANTS	30-12	W
Oct. 1	vs. CARDINALS	35-16	W
Oct. 8	vs. COWBOYS	42-10	W
Oct. 15	at BROWNS	17-19	L
Oct. 23	at VIKINGS	17-22	L
Oct. 29	vs. BENGALS	17-31	L
Nov. 12	at JAGUARS	34-3	W
Nov. 19	vs. BUCCANEERS	27-14	W
Nov. 23	at SEAHAWKS	31-13	W
Dec. 3	at EAGLES	42-19	W
Dec. 10	vs. SEAHAWKS	28-16	W
Dec. 17	at CARDINALS	45-29	W
Dec. 25	vs. RAVENS	19-33	L
Dec. 31	at COMMANDERS	27-10	W
Jan. 7	vs. RAMS	20-21	L

NFC PLAYOFFS			
Jan. 20	vs. PACKERS	24-21	W
Jan. 28	vs. LIONS	34-31	W

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS SCOUTING REPORT

You're going to compete. They have a culture there and they have a standard you have to meet. ... They've been knocking at the door of the Super Bowl for years now."

OFFENSE

Talk about a loaded attack. The 2023 49ers are the fourth team ever with a 4,000-yard passer and four players each with 1,000-plus scrimmage yards in the same season.

When Shanahan was hired in 2017, he was already known as a brilliant offensive coach. Nothing he has done with the 49ers has tarnished that reputation.

"I have an incredible amount of respect for Kyle as a coach, as a play-caller," says former Packers defensive coordinator Joe Barry, who faced the 49ers twice a year for four seasons as a defensive coach with the Rams. "Then when you put all the pieces that he has around him, they are elite at a lot of spots. The running back, the tight end, the wideouts. And when you add that to a guy who's arguably one of the best at calling plays, he's got a lot of toys to play with and he does a great job. ... You only get to play with one football, and it's amazing how they can spread that around."

The quarterback charged with spreading that ball around has written a storybook career in less than two full seasons. Purdy didn't start his first NFL game until Week 14 of his rookie campaign, forced into action when Jimmy Garoppolo was lost to injury. Little was expected from Purdy, who became "Mr. Irrelevant" for being the last player taken in the 2022 draft. Yet he soon proved that the NFL stage wasn't too much for him, joining Hall of Famer Dan Marino as the only quarterbacks since 1950 with at least two touchdown passes and a passer rating of 100 or higher in each of his first three career starts.

This season, Purdy has proven that those numbers were no fluke. He led the NFL in passer rating (113.0), finished third in touchdown passes (31), and fifth in passing yards (4,280).

Shanahan called Purdy the most poised rookie passer he's ever worked with. That

49ers receiver Brandon Aiyuk (left) ranked in the NFL's top 10 in both receiving yards (1,342) and yards per catch (17.9). Christian McCaffrey (above) is the first 49ers running back to lead the NFL in yards from scrimmage since Roger Craig in 1988, the season the 49ers won their third Super Bowl. Among the most decorated linemen to ever play in the NFL, offensive tackle Trent Williams (right) has been selected to 11 Pro Bowls, including all four of his seasons in San Francisco.

Previous spread: DANIEL KUDIN JR./AP IMAGES (Purdy); MATT YORK/AP IMAGES (Greenlaw); KYUSUNG GONG/AP IMAGES (Wishnowsky)
This page: GODOFREDO A. VASQUEZ/AP IMAGES (Aiyuk); DANIEL KUDIN JR./AP IMAGES (McCaffrey); RICH SCHULTZ/AP IMAGES (Williams)

poise has continued to show in 2023 — like when he didn't play all that well in the rainy Divisional playoff game against the Packers yet completed six of seven passes on a game-winning drive in the closing minutes.

While Purdy's contributions have been massive, the strength of a Shanahan-led offense is its zone running game. That has been the case again this season, as the 49ers ranked third in the NFL in rushing offense (140.5 yards per game).

One of the best all-purpose running backs in football, McCaffrey finished first with 2,023 scrimmage yards (a league-leading 1,459 rushing, plus 564 receiving) and tied for the league lead with 21 total touchdowns (14 rushing, seven receiving).

San Francisco also possesses an X-factor in the running game in the form of wide receiver Deebo Samuel. The fifth-year pro was a breakout star in 2021 when he used his deadly combination of size, speed, strength, and quickness to become the first receiver in the Super Bowl era to score eight rushing touchdowns in one season.

His 2022 numbers were limited because he missed four games with an injury, but Samuel has bounced back this season. He scored five rushing touchdowns — his fourth season with at least three rushing scores — and he is one of the NFL's most productive players when it comes to yards after contact. As a receiver, Samuel finished with 60 receptions for 892 yards and seven touchdowns.

It was speedy fourth-year pro Brandon Aiyuk who led the team in receptions (75) and set a career high with 1,342 receiving yards, good for seventh in the league.

Backup receiver Jauan Jennings has also been getting in on the action. Jennings had only one TD catch in the regular season, but he's been targeted more in crucial spots in recent weeks. Jennings is dangerous because he's such a good run blocker; Shanahan notes that when defenders brace themselves to take on a Jennings block, it gives the 6-3, 212-pounder an opportunity to slip away and get open.

And speaking of guys who can both block and catch passes, there's tight end George Kittle. The five-time Pro Bowler, one of the league's best at his position, recorded his first 1,000-yard season since 2019.

It all starts up front for San Francisco, led by perhaps the best offensive tackle in football. The 49ers traded for left tackle Trent Williams in 2020, and he earned his 11th Pro Bowl selection this season. Right tackle Colton McKivitz gives the team a strong set of bookend tackles. San Francisco replaced six-time Pro Bowl center Alex Mack last season with Jake Brendel, an undrafted player who had been waived by the Niners in 2021 and re-signed before the 2022 season. Brendel has remained a fixture while anchoring the line.

An unsung team leader who makes the offensive line even better is fullback Kyle Juszczyk, an eight-time Pro Bowler who, in addition to being an excellent blocker, contributed 119 receiving yards and a pair of touchdowns in 2023. Juszczyk caught a 15-yard TD pass when the 49ers played in Super Bowl LIV.

DEFENSE

For the second time in three years, the 49ers had to replace their highly respected defensive coordinator. In 2021,

A LEGACY OF LARGE PLAYS

Big plays at crucial times have defined the 2023 San Francisco 49ers during their march to the franchise's eighth Super Bowl appearance. The Brock Purdy-engineered fourth-quarter drive that ended with Christian McCaffrey's second touchdown of the game, backed up by linebacker Dre Greenlaw's victory-sealing pick, in the NFC Divisional playoffs are the latest examples of how these 49ers have found a way to pull off the biggest plays at the largest times.

Of course, those plays only add to a lengthy list, since such moments are a big part of 49ers history. In 2019, when the NFL named its Top 100 Plays of all time, San Francisco was involved in eight of them. That's quite an achievement for a franchise that had one NFL playoff appearance prior to 1970 and didn't win its first championship until Super Bowl XVI.

Dwight Clark (87) makes "The Catch" in the final minute of the 1981 NFC Championship Game against the Cowboys. The 28-27 win sent the 49ers to Super Bowl XVI, where they defeated the Bengals for their first Super Bowl title.

And that Super Bowl title may never have happened if not for the No. 2 play on the list: "The Catch," Dwight Clark's leaping back-of-the-end zone grab of a Joe Montana pass with 58 seconds remaining in the 1981 NFC Championship Game that lifted the 49ers to a 28-27 win over the Cowboys. Two weeks later, the 49ers beat the Bengals for the first of the franchise's five Super Bowl titles.

"Any time you are able to win a championship, you know that there were some big plays along the way that made the difference," the late Clark, a 10th-round draft pick who had been a high jumper in high school, said years later. "I feel honored people are still talking about it and honored to be part of a play that was kind of the culmination of [that] incredible surprise season. It's great that I could give 49er fans a moment they can relive over and over and over."

— Mark Preston

ANDY HAYT/GETTY IMAGES

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS SCOUTING REPORT

ABOVE: Linebacker Fred Warner's 132 tackles led the 49ers this season, and he added a career-best four interceptions. RIGHT: The league leader in sacks in 2022, defensive end Nick Bosa led San Francisco in that category again this season, finishing with 10.5.

it was Robert Saleh, who left San Francisco to become the Jets' head coach. And after DeMeco Ryans admirably filled those shoes in 2022, he was hired as head coach of the Texans. Veteran coach Steve Wilks took over as defensive coordinator this season and the 49ers haven't missed a beat.

Led by Pro Bowlers and top-notch talent at all three levels, San Francisco allowed the third-fewest points per game (17.5) and eighth-fewest total yards per game (303.9). They held 11 regular-season opponents to 19 points or fewer.

All great defenses boast a disruptive force up front who is capable of getting to the quarterback without the help of blitzing linebackers. The 49ers have two such players in defensive ends Nick Bosa and Young, who was obtained for a 2024 third-round pick on Nov. 1. Young tied a career-high with 7.5 sacks — 5.0 with Washington and 2.5 more after joining San Francisco. Bosa, meanwhile, was first on the team with 10.5 sacks after leading the league with 18.5 sacks in 2022, when he was the NFL's Defensive Player of the Year.

The interior of the front four is imposing as well, with veteran tackles Javon Hargrave and Arik Armstead. Hargrave, who had 7.0 sacks, was a key free-agent addition to the 49ers after starting in the Super Bowl last season for the Eagles.

Mike linebacker Fred Warner anchors the defense. The sixth-year pro, so active and involved both against the run and the pass, earned his third Pro Bowl nod.

"You see him all over the tape," says Packers quarterback Jordan Love. "He's flying around, making plays left and right.

JEFF LEWIS/AP IMAGES (Warner); DANIEL KUCIN JR./AP IMAGES (Bosa)

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SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS SCOUTING REPORT

He's a big-time player that you've got to know where he's at. He's a great player."

Warner led the team with 132 combined tackles and added career highs in passes defensed (11) and interceptions (4). Fifth-year linebacker Dre Greenlaw finished right behind him with 120 tackles. With their speed and sure tackling, Warner and Greenlaw form one of the best linebacker duos in the NFL.

The secondary is loaded with playmakers who do their best to take advantage of the front putting pressure on opposing quarterbacks. The 49ers like to mix things up on the back end, often disguising coverages and switching from Cover-3 to Cover-2 to Cover-1 at will. That versatility in the defensive backfield can wreak havoc on opposing quarterbacks, and the numbers prove it.

Ten different 49ers had at least one interception this season, led by cornerback Charvarius Ward's five. Ward, who won a Super Bowl with the Chiefs four years ago, earned his first Pro Bowl nod after leading the NFL with a career-high 23 passes defensed.

Big-play safety Talanoa Hufanga and cornerback Deommodore Lenoir each had three picks. Overall, the 49ers were tied for the league lead with 22 interceptions.

"At the end of the day, we do what we do, and we've done it since I've been here," Bosa says. "Zone coverage and rushing four, and there's tons of different levels to doing it. We need to be at the highest level possible of doing that, and if we are, then we're going to be a really good defense."

SPECIAL TEAMS

The 49ers took kicker Jake Moody in the third round of the 2023 draft, with the 99th overall selection — making Moody just the second kicker in the last 15 years to go in the top 100 picks. The former Michigan Wolverine rewarded the team's faith in him, hitting 21 of 25 field-goal attempts, with a long of 57. He connected on 60 of 61 extra-point tries.

Fifth-year punter Mitch Wishnowsky had a career-best 47.7-yard average this season. The Australian-born Wishnowsky — aptly nicknamed the "Boomin' Onion" — had only two touchbacks and dropped 50 percent of his punts inside the 20.

Receiver Ray-Ray McCloud III has done a solid job returning both punts and kickoffs.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS
ALL-TIME PLAYOFF RESULTS
(39 WINS, 24 LOSSES; 5 SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONSHIPS)

YEAR	ROUND	OPPONENT	SCORE	W/L
1949	AAFC Divisional	vs. New York Yankees	17-7	W
	AAFC Championship	at Browns	7-21	L
1957	NFL Divisional	vs. Lions	27-31	L
1970	NFC Divisional	at Vikings	17-14	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Cowboys	10-17	L
1971	NFC Divisional	vs. Washington Redskins	24-20	W
	NFC Championship	at Cowboys	3-14	L
1972	NFC Divisional	vs. Cowboys	28-30	L
1981	NFC Divisional	vs. Giants	38-24	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Cowboys	28-27	W
	Super Bowl XVI	Bengals	26-21	W
1983	NFC Divisional	vs. Lions	24-23	W
	NFC Championship	at Washington Redskins	21-24	L
1984	NFC Divisional	vs. Giants	21-10	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Bears	23-0	W
	Super Bowl XIX	Dolphins	38-16	W
1985	NFC Wild Card	at Giants	3-17	L
1986	NFC Divisional	at Giants	3-49	L
1987	NFC Divisional	vs. Vikings	24-36	L
1988	NFC Divisional	vs. Vikings	34-9	W
	NFC Championship	at Bears	28-3	W
	Super Bowl XXIII	Bengals	20-16	W
1989	NFC Divisional	vs. Vikings	41-13	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Rams	30-3	W
	Super Bowl XXIV	Broncos	55-10	W
1990	NFC Divisional	vs. Washington Redskins	28-10	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Giants	13-15	L
1992	NFC Divisional	vs. Washington Redskins	20-13	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Cowboys	20-30	L
1993	NFC Divisional	vs. Giants	44-3	W
	NFC Championship	at Cowboys	21-38	L
1994	NFC Divisional	vs. Bears	44-15	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Cowboys	38-28	W
	Super Bowl XXIX	San Diego Chargers	49-26	W
1995	NFC Divisional	vs. Packers	17-27	L
1996	NFC Wild Card	vs. Eagles	14-0	W
	NFC Divisional	at Packers	14-35	L
1997	NFC Divisional	vs. Vikings	38-22	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Packers	10-23	L
1998	NFC Wild Card	vs. Packers	30-27	W
	NFC Divisional	at Falcons	18-20	L
2001	NFC Wild Card	at Packers	15-25	L
2002	NFC Wild Card	vs. Giants	39-38	W
	NFC Divisional	at Buccaneers	6-31	L
2011	NFC Divisional	vs. Saints	36-32	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Giants	17-20 (OT)	L
2012	NFC Divisional	vs. Packers	45-31	W
	NFC Championship	at Falcons	28-24	W
	Super Bowl XLVII	Ravens	31-34	L
2013	NFC Wild Card	at Packers	23-20	W
	NFC Divisional	at Panthers	23-10	W
	NFC Championship	at Seahawks	17-23	L
2019	NFC Divisional	vs. Vikings	27-10	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Packers	37-20	W
	Super Bowl LIV	Chiefs	20-31	L
2021	NFC Wild Card	at Cowboys	23-17	W
	NFC Divisional	at Packers	13-10	W
	NFC Championship	at Rams	17-20	L
2022	NFC Wild Card	vs. Seahawks	41-23	W
	NFC Divisional	vs. Cowboys	19-12	W
	NFC Championship	at Eagles	7-31	L
2023	NFC Divisional	vs. Packers	24-21	W
	NFC Championship	vs. Lions	34-31	W

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Walt Leger

President & CEO New Orleans & Company

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SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS SCOUTING REPORT

The sixth-year pro averaged 8.5 yards per punt return and 22.5 yards on kickoffs.

GAME PLAN

There's no doubt the 49ers are among the most complete football teams in the NFL. They were one of two teams — along with the Baltimore Ravens — to rank in the top eight in total offense and total defense. Efficient and opportunistic on both sides of the ball, San Francisco had a turnover ratio of plus-10, tied for fifth in the league.

The 49ers can score points in so many ways, it's sometimes just a matter of figuring out exactly what they want to do.

Of course, being a champion requires more than talent. San Francisco looked like the best team in the NFL after a 5-0 start but then lost three in a row. Injuries to key players such as Williams contributed to that downturn, and suddenly, the football world was questioning the 49ers' status as a leading Super Bowl contender. But the team bounced back to win six consecutive games and eventually became the NFC's top seed.

"It's about resiliency," Williams says. "If you look around the league, every team has that skid, whether it's three games [or more]. How you come back from that is really the true test of character. We know we've got one of the best rosters in football, the best head coach in football. We know that if we can play up to our standard, everything will take care of itself."

As long as Purdy continues to play mistake-free football and look like a poised veteran, he has a chance to put himself in the record books alongside Montana and Young.

Of course, San Francisco's success through the years has never been a one-man show. The dynasty of the '80s featured a variety of superstars, from Jerry Rice to Roger Craig to Ronnie Lott. But they also had under-the-radar contributors like John Taylor and Tom Rathman and Keena Turner. If the 49ers do take home their sixth Lombardi Trophy, it will be a true team effort.

Craig Ellenport is a senior editor at Sports Illustrated. *He has covered the NFL for 25 years and is the author of* NFL 100: The Greatest Moments of the NFL's Century *(Triumph).*

[NFC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME]

49ERS 34 << FINAL LIONS 31

An electrifying second-half surge, led by second-year quarterback Brock Purdy, brought the 49ers back from a huge deficit to stun the Lions and set up a rematch of Super Bowl LIV.

San Francisco trailed, 24-7, at halftime, but it was a different story once the teams returned to the field. The 49ers scored on five straight possessions to seize command.

It started with Jake Moody's 43-yard field goal. After the 49ers' defense stopped Detroit on downs, the home team enjoyed a bit of good fortune when Purdy's deep pass bounced off a defender's helmet and into the arms of Brandon Aiyuk for a 51-yard gain. Three plays later, Purdy found Aiyuk on a TD pass.

Detroit would fumble on its next offensive play, setting up a 24-yard drive that ended with Christian McCaffrey's second scoring run of the game, knotting things at 24-all. In the fourth quarter, Moody's 33-yard field goal gave the 49ers the lead and an Elijah Mitchell TD run put the contest out of reach.

Purdy threw for 267 yards; Deebo Samuel caught eight of his 20 completions.

CHAMPIONSHIP

LEVI'S STADIUM
Santa Clara, Calif. January 28, 2024

	1	2	3	4	F
#3 Lions	14	10	0	7	31
#1 **49ers**	0	7	17	10	**34**

1st Quarter
DET Williams 42-yard run (Badgley kick), 13:27
DET Montgomery 1-yard run (Badgley kick), 2:37

2nd Quarter
SF McCaffrey 2-yard run (Moody kick), 13:52
DET Gibbs 15-yard run (Badgley kick), 6:01
DET Badgley 21-yard FG, 0:10

3rd Quarter
SF Moody 43-yard FG, 11:06
SF Purdy 6-yard pass to Aiyuk (Moody kick), 5:22
SF McCaffrey 1-yard run (Moody kick), 3:04

4th Quarter
SF Moody 33-yard FG, 9:56
SF Mitchell 3-yard run (Moody kick), 3:06
DET Goff 3-yard pass to Williams (Badgley kick), 1:00

CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP IMAGES

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SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

LEFT TO RIGHT: Tony York, Jed York, Danielle York, Dr. John York, Denise DeBartolo York, Mara York, and Jenna York

Denise DeBartolo York and John York

CO-CHAIRMEN

DENISE AND JOHN YORK bring long and distinguished careers in sports and business to their roles as Co-Chairs of the San Francisco 49ers, where they combine their passion for building a championship team with their commitment to being the best possible business partners and community citizens.

Since Denise's father, Edward J. DeBartolo Sr., purchased the 49ers in 1977, she has been an integral part of four decades of 49ers football, including 50 playoff contests and five Super Bowl victories. Earlier in her career, Denise served as president of the NHL's Pittsburgh Penguins. Under her leadership, the Penguins were revitalized and transformed into a championship team, winning the organization's first Stanley Cup in 1991.

A successful entrepreneur, John spent years as senior vice president/director of racing operations for the DeBartolo Corporation, instituting programs designed to enhance the fan experience and raise the profile of thoroughbred horse racing. John, a noted pathologist, began his business career in 1982 as founder of DeYor Laboratories in Youngstown, Ohio. From three employees, he molded the company into a 500-person operation with facilities in three states before selling it to Corning, Inc., in 1993.

Denise and John's dedication to the sport of football extends to the top levels of the NFL. Denise is an active member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame Committee, helping to oversee the league's ongoing support of the museum that pays tribute to the triumphs of professional football's greatest stars. John is chairman of the NFL's Health & Safety Advisory Committee, which was established in 2011. He also is a member of both the Audit and International committees, the latter of which he previously served as chairman. Under his leadership, the 49ers played in the first regular-season game outside of the United States, taking on the Arizona Cardinals at Estadio Azteca in Mexico City in 2005.

Under the leadership of Denise and John, the 49ers' community outreach efforts and the 49ers Foundation are recognized among the most impactful in all of professional sports. The 49ers were named the 2017 ESPN Sports Humanitarian Team of the Year and the 2017 Pop Warner Little Scholars Team of the Year. The 49ers and the 49ers Foundation were previously recognized as Beyond Sport's 2015 Sport Team of the Year for Outstanding Philanthropic Sports Organization and the 2013 winner of the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Steve Patterson Award for Sports Philanthropy.

Above all else, Denise and John first define themselves as husband, wife, and parents. Their eldest son, Jed, now carries on the family's legacy — begun by his grandfather, Edward J. DeBartolo Sr.; his uncle, Eddie DeBartolo Jr.; and his parents — by serving as CEO of the 49ers. Their twin daughters, Jenna and Mara, have worked in the Napa Valley wine industry for several years and are active participants with the 49ers Foundation and community relations efforts. Their son, Tony, was an entrepreneur whose true passion lied in philanthropy, which led him to support a number of nonprofit efforts and work closely with incarcerated youth. Denise and John have two grandchildren, Jaxon and Brixton, the sons of Jed and his wife, Danielle.

SCOUTING REPORT

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS TEAM OFFICIALS

Denise DeBartolo York
Co-Chairman

John York
Co-Chairman

Jed York
Chief Executive Officer

John M. Sobrato
Co-Owner

Mark Wan
Co-Owner

Gideon Yu
Co-Owner

John Lynch
President of Football Operations/General Manager

Paraag Marathe
President of 49ers Enterprises & Executive Vice President of Football Operations

Al Guido
President

Harpreet Basran
Chief People Officer

Alex Chang
Chief Marketing Officer

Brano Perkovich
Chief Investment Officer

Brent Schoeb
Chief Revenue Officer

Peter Wilhelm
Chief Financial Officer

Jihad Beauchman
Executive Vice President, General Counsel

Jeff Fong
Executive Vice President, Finance

Patty Inglis
Executive Vice President

Costa Kladianos
Executive Vice President, Head of Technology

Michael Bracken
Vice President of Football Technology/ Video

David Eisenberg
Vice President, Content, Digital and Social

Brian Hampton
Vice President, Football Administration

Kevin Hilton
Vice President, Corporate Partnerships

Sean Kundu
Vice President, Corporate Development

Jenni Luke
Vice President of Community Impact

Collin Meador
Vice President, 49ers Enterprises

Steve Risser
Vice President, Team Operations

Corry Rush
Vice President, Football Communications

Keena Turner
Vice President and Senior Advisor to the General Manager

Ellie Caple
Director of Communications and Public Affairs

Tariq Ahmad
Director of Player Personnel

Jay Brunetti
Director, Equipment Operations

RJ Gillen
Director of Player Personnel

Matthew Greiner
Director, Groundskeeper

Jordan Mazur
Director, Nutrition

Guy McIntyre
Director, Alumni Relations

Austin Moss II
Director of Player Engagement

Elliott Williams
Director of Functional Performance

Dustin Little
Head Athletic Trainer

Tim McAdams, M.D.
Head Team Physician/ Orthopaedic Surgeon

Dustin Perry
Head Strength & Conditioning

Ben Peterson
Head of Player Health & Performance

Anthony Saglimbeni
Primary Care/ Internal Medicine

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SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS SCOUTING REPORT

Kyle Shanahan

HEAD COACH

KYLE SHANAHAN was named the 20th head coach of the San Francisco 49ers on Feb. 6, 2017, after two seasons as the Atlanta Falcons' offensive coordinator.

Shanahan spent nine seasons as an NFL offensive coordinator, starting with the Houston Texans (2008-09) and then going to Washington (2010-13), the Cleveland Browns (2014), and the Falcons (2015-16). In six of those seasons, he directed an offense that ranked among the NFL's top 10 in total yards.

Following the 2016 season, during which he helped the Falcons reach Super Bowl LI, Shanahan was named AP Assistant Coach of the Year, Coordinator of the Year by *Sporting News*, and Assistant Coach of the Year by the Pro Football Writers of America.

In 2019, he was named Coach of the Year by *Sporting News* and NFC Coach of the Year by the Committee of 101 after leading the 49ers to a 13-3 regular-season record, the NFC West title, and an appearance in Super Bowl LIV.

Shanahan was born Dec. 14, 1979, in Minneapolis, Minn. He began his collegiate career as a wide receiver at Duke before transferring to the University of Texas and graduating in 2003. He and his wife, Mandy, have three children: Stella, Carter, and Lexi.

ASSISTANT COACHES

Chris Foerster
Run Game Coordinator/ Offensive Line

Brian Schneider
Special Teams Coordinator

Steve Wilks
Defensive Coordinator

Anthony Lynn
Assistant Head Coach/ Running Backs

Cameron Brown
Defensive Quality Control

Daniel Bullocks
Defensive Backs

James Cregg
Assistant Offensive Line

Brian Fleury
Tight Ends

Dashon Goldson
Defensive Assistant

Joe Graves
Assistant Offensive Line

Brian Griese
Quarterbacks

Leonard Hankerson
Wide Receivers

Matthew Harper
Assistant Special Teams

Andrew Hayes-Stoker
Assistant Defensive Backs

Jordan Hogan
Offensive Assistant

Johnny Holland
Linebackers

Kris Kocurek
Defensive Line

Klay Kubiak
Assistant Quarterbacks

Klint Kubiak
Offensive Passing Game Specialist

August Mangin
Special Teams Quality Control/ Game Management Specialist

Miguel Reveles
Offensive Assistant

Asauni Rufus
Offensive Quality Control

Deuce Schwartz
Offensive Quality Control

Nick Sorensen
Defensive Passing Game Specialist/Nickels

Darryl Tapp
Assistant Defensive Line

Robert Turner Jr.
Running Backs

Jacob Webster
Defensive Quality Control

Patrick Hagedorn
Assistant to the Head Coach

Max Molz
Coaching Operations Assistant

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS
NUMERICAL ROSTER

NO	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	BIRTH DATE	NFL EXP	COLLEGE	HOW ACQUIRED
0	Samuel Womack III	CB	5-10	189	7/7/99	2	Toledo	D5 '22
2	Deommodore Lenoir	DB	5-10	200	10/6/99	3	Oregon	D5b '21
3	Ray-Ray McCloud III	WR	5-9	190	10/15/96	6	Clemson	FA '22
4	Jake Moody	K	6-1	210	11/23/99	R	Michigan	D3b '23
5	Randy Gregory	LB/DL	6-5	242	11/23/92	7	Nebraska	T (DEN) '23
7	Charvarius Ward	CB	6-1	196	5/16/96	6	Middle Tennessee State	FA '22
9	Brayden Willis	TE	6-4	240	11/11/99	R	Oklahoma	D7a '23
10	Ronnie Bell	WR	6-0	190	1/28/00	R	Michigan	D7b '23
11	Brandon Aiyuk	WR	6-0	200	3/17/98	4	Arizona State	D2b '20
13	Brock Purdy	QB	6-1	220	12/27/99	2	Iowa State	D7 '22
14	Sam Darnold	QB	6-3	225	6/5/97	6	Southern California	FA '23
15	Jauan Jennings	WR	6-3	212	7/10/97	3	Tennessee	D7 '20
17	Brandon Allen	QB	6-2	209	9/5/92	7	Arkansas	FA '23
18	Mitch Wishnowsky	P	6-2	220	3/3/92	5	Utah	D4 '19
19	Deebo Samuel	WR	6-0	215	1/15/96	5	South Carolina	D2 '19
20	Ambry Thomas	CB	6-0	190	9/9/99	3	Michigan	D3b '21
23	Christian McCaffrey	RB	5-11	210	6/7/96	7	Stanford	T (CAR) '22
24	Jordan Mason	RB	5-11	223	5/24/99	2	Georgia Tech	FA '22
25	Elijah Mitchell	RB	5-10	200	5/2/98	3	Louisiana	D6 '21
26	Isaiah Oliver	CB	6-0	202	9/30/96	6	Colorado	FA '23
27	Ji'Ayir Brown	S	5-11	202	1/25/00	R	Penn State	D3a '23
28	Darrell Luter Jr.	CB	6-0	190	4/24/00	R	South Alabama	D5a '23
30	George Odum	S	6-1	202	11/3/93	6	Central Arkansas	FA '22
31	Tashaun Gipson Sr.	S	6-1	212	8/7/90	12	Wyoming	FA '22
33	Logan Ryan	S	5-11	195	2/9/91	11	Rutgers	FA '23
44	Kyle Juszczyk	FB	6-2	235	4/23/91	11	Harvard	FA '17
45	Demetrius Flannigan-Fowles	LB	6-2	223	9/4/96	4	Arizona	FA '19
46	Taybor Pepper	LS	6-4	245	5/28/94	6	Michigan State	FA '20
48	Oren Burks	LB	6-3	233	3/21/95	6	Vanderbilt	FA '22
50	Jalen Graham	LB	6-3	220	1/11/01	R	Purdue	D7c '23
51	Robert Beal Jr.	DL	6-4	250	8/18/99	R	Georgia	D5b '23
53	Dee Winters	LB	5-11	227	10/17/00	R	TCU	D6 '23
54	Fred Warner	LB	6-3	230	11/19/96	6	Brigham Young	D3a '18
55	Jon Feliciano	OL	6-4	325	2/10/92	9	Miami (FL)	FA '23
57	Dre Greenlaw	LB	6-0	230	5/25/97	5	Arkansas	D5 '19
64	Jake Brendel	OL	6-4	299	9/10/92	6	UCLA	FA '20
65	Aaron Banks	OL	6-5	325	9/3/97	3	Notre Dame	D2 '21
68	Colton McKivitz	OL	6-6	301	8/9/96	4	West Virginia	D5 '20
69	Sebastian Joseph-Day	DL	6-4	310	3/21/95	5	Rutgers	FA '23
71	Trent Williams	OL	6-5	320	7/19/88	14	Oklahoma	T (WAS) '20
74	Spencer Burford	OL	6-4	300	7/19/00	2	Texas-San Antonio	D4 '22
75	Matt Pryor	OL	6-7	332	12/16/94	6	TCU	FA '23
76	Jaylon Moore	OL	6-4	311	1/9/98	3	Western Michigan	D5a '21
78	Ben Bartch	OL	6-6	315	7/22/98	4	St. John's (MN)	FA '23
84	Chris Conley	WR	6-3	205	10/25/92	9	Georgia	FA '23
85	George Kittle	TE	6-4	250	10/9/93	7	Iowa	D5a '17
89	Charlie Woerner	TE	6-5	241	10/16/97	4	Georgia	D6 '20
90	Kevin Givens	DL	6-1	285	3/1/97	4	Penn State	FA '19
91	Arik Armstead	DL	6-7	290	11/15/93	9	Oregon	D1 '15
92	Chase Young	DL	6-5	265	4/14/99	4	Ohio State	T (WAS) '23
97	Nick Bosa	DL	6-4	266	10/23/97	5	Ohio State	D1 '19
98	Javon Hargrave	DL	6-2	305	2/7/93	8	South Carolina State	FA '23
99	Javon Kinlaw	DT	6-5	319	10/3/97	4	South Carolina	D1a '20

Brandon Aiyuk (11)
WIDE RECEIVER

Brandon Allen (17)
QUARTERBACK

Arik Armstead (91)
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Aaron Banks (65)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Ben Bartch (78)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Robert Beal Jr. (51)
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Ronnie Bell (10)
WIDE RECEIVER

Nick Bosa (97)
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Jake Brendel (64)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Ji'Ayir Brown (27)
SAFETY

Spencer Burford (74)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Oren Burks (48)
LINEBACKER

Chris Conley (84)
WIDE RECEIVER

Sam Darnold (14)
QUARTERBACK

Jon Feliciano (55)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Demetrius Flannigan-Fowles (45)
LINEBACKER

Tashaun Gipson Sr. (31)
SAFETY

Kevin Givens (90)
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Jalen Graham (50)
LINEBACKER

Dre Greenlaw (57)
LINEBACKER

Randy Gregory (5)
LINEBACKER/
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Javon Hargrave (98)
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Jauan Jennings (15)
WIDE RECEIVER

Sebastian Joseph-Day (69)
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

Kyle Juszczyk (44)
FULLBACK

Javon Kinlaw (99)
DEFENSIVE TACKLE

George Kittle (85)
TIGHT END

Deommodore Lenoir (2)
DEFENSIVE BACK

Darrell Luter Jr. (28)
CORNERBACK

Jordan Mason (24)
RUNNING BACK

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SCOUTING REPORT

Christian McCaffrey (23)
RUNNING BACK

Ray-Ray McCloud III (3)
WIDE RECEIVER

Colton McKivitz (68)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Elijah Mitchell (25)
RUNNING BACK

Jake Moody (4)
KICKER

Jaylon Moore (76)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

George Odum (30)
SAFETY

Isaiah Oliver (26)
CORNERBACK

Taybor Pepper (46)
LONG SNAPPER

Matt Pryor (75)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Brock Purdy (13)
QUARTERBACK

Logan Ryan (33)
SAFETY

Deebo Samuel (19)
WIDE RECEIVER

Ambry Thomas (20)
CORNERBACK

Charvarius Ward (7)
CORNERBACK

Fred Warner (54)
LINEBACKER

Trent Williams (71)
OFFENSIVE LINEMAN

Brayden Willis (9)
TIGHT END

Dee Winters (53)
LINEBACKER

Mitch Wishnowsky (18)
PUNTER

Charlie Woerner (89)
TIGHT END

Samuel Womack III (0)
CORNERBACK

Chase Young (92)
DEFENSIVE LINEMAN

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS
STATISTICAL LEADERS/DEPTH CHARTS

OFFENSE

	PASSING					
	COMP-ATT	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	RTNG
Brock Purdy	308-444	69.4	4280	31	11	113.0
Sam Darnold	28-46	60.9	297	2	1	85.2

	RUSHING				
	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Christian McCaffrey	272	1459	5.4	72	14
Elijah Mitchell	75	281	3.7	18	2
Deebo Samuel	37	225	6.1	23	5
Jordan Mason	40	206	5.2	26	3

	RECEIVING				
	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Brandon Aiyuk	75	1342	17.9	76	7
Christian McCaffrey	67	564	8.4	41	7
George Kittle	65	1020	15.7	66	6
Deebo Samuel	60	892	14.9	54	7
Jauan Jennings	19	265	13.9	31	1
Kyle Juszczyk	14	119	8.5	22	2
Ray-Ray McCloud III	12	135	11.3	41	0

DEPTH CHART

WR	11	Brandon Aiyuk
	3	Ray-Ray McCloud III
	10	Ronnie Bell
LT	71	Trent Williams
	76	Jaylon Moore
LG	65	Aaron Banks
	55	Jon Feliciano
C	64	Jake Brendel
RG	74	Spencer Burford
	78	Ben Bartch
RT	68	Colton McKivitz
	75	Matt Pryor
TE	85	George Kittle
	89	Charlie Woerner
	9	Brayden Willis
WR	19	Deebo Samuel
	15	Jauan Jennings
	84	Chris Conley
QB	13	Brock Purdy
	14	Sam Darnold
	17	Brandon Allen
RB	23	Christian McCaffrey
	25	Elijah Mitchell
	24	Jordan Mason
FB	44	Kyle Juszczyk

DEFENSE

	TACKLES		
	SOLO	ASSISTS	TOTAL
Fred Warner	82	50	132
Dre Greenlaw	75	45	120
Deommodore Lenoir	58	26	84
Charvarius Ward	56	16	72
Tashaun Gipson Sr.	41	19	60
Isaiah Oliver	43	15	58
Nick Bosa	34	19	53
Talanoa Hufanga	39	12	51
Oren Burks	29	16	45

	INTERCEPTIONS				
	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Charvarius Ward	5	91	18.2	66	1
Fred Warner	4	63	15.8	32	0
Deommodore Lenoir	3	49	16.3	28	0
Talanoa Hufanga	3	48	16.0	28	0

	SACKS	
	NO	YDS
Nick Bosa	10.5	58.5
Javon Hargrave	7.0	46.5
Arik Armstead	5.0	37.0
Javon Kinlaw	3.5	34.5
Clelin Ferrell	3.5	12.5

	PASSES DEFENSED	FORCED FUMBLES/ RECOVERIES
Charvarius Ward	23	1/0
Fred Warner	11	4/0
Deommodore Lenoir	10	0/0
Ambry Thomas	7	1/1

DEPTH CHART

LDE	92	Chase Young
	51	Robert Beal Jr.
LDT	91	Arik Armstead
	90	Kevin Givens
	69	Sebastian Joseph-Day
RDT	98	Javon Hargrave
	99	Javon Kinlaw
RDE	97	Nick Bosa
	5	Randy Gregory
	51	Robert Beal Jr.
SAM	48	Oren Burks
MIKE	54	Fred Warner
	45	Demetrius Flannigan-Fowles
	50	Jalen Graham
WILL	57	Dre Greenlaw
	53	Dee Winters
LCB	7	Charvarius Ward
	0	Samuel Womack III
RCB	2	Deommodore Lenoir
	20	Ambry Thomas
	28	Darrell Luter Jr.
NB	26	Isaiah Oliver
SS	27	Ji'Ayir Brown
	33	Logan Ryan
FS	31	Tashaun Gipson Sr.

SPECIAL TEAMS

	FIELD GOALS					
	TOTAL	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Jake Moody	21/25	0/0	7/7	8/9	4/6	2/3

	KICK RETURNS				
	RET	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Ray-Ray McCloud III	10	225	22.5	34	0
Deebo Samuel	6	154	25.7	34	0

	PUNT RETURNS				
	RET	FC	AVG	LONG	TD
Ray-Ray McCloud III	24	9	8.5	19	0
Ronnie Bell	10	4	7.0	17	0

	PUNTING					
	NO	AVG	NET	TCHBK	IN/20	LONG
Mitch Wishnowsky	52	47.7	42.7	2	26	67

DEPTH CHART

P	18	Mitch Wishnowsky
K	4	Jake Moody
H	18	Mitch Wishnowsky
LS	46	Taybor Pepper
PR	3	Ray-Ray McCloud III
	10	Ronnie Bell
KR	3	Ray-Ray McCloud III
	10	Ronnie Bell

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SUPER · BOWL · LVIII

WEEK OF EVENTS

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Welcome to Super Bowl LVIII!

On behalf of the Las Vegas Super Bowl LVIII Host Committee, welcome to Las Vegas, the entertainment and sports capital of the world, for our first-ever Super Bowl.

If this is your first time in Las Vegas for Super Bowl weekend, we trust that you'll enjoy the premier hospitality that we offer to hundreds of thousands of fans and locals every year. Regardless of where the Super Bowl is played, the big game in Las Vegas is a celebration like no other and one of the biggest weekends on our annual calendar. Having the actual game and entire week of official events here in 2024 at Allegiant Stadium is an honor, and a week that raised the bar, even by Vegas standards.

Thanks in part to you, the impact of hosting Super Bowl LVIII will be felt across the valley as more than two million people call Clark County home. Through our Business Connect Program, we have helped more than 200 local businesses with contracting for the NFL and other major events around the city. In partnership with NFL Green, the Host Committee has established a legacy of environmental sustainability that will benefit our community for years to come. Additionally, this year's Super Bowl has provided the opportunity for more than 9,000 volunteers to get involved in this historic event.

Hosting Super Bowl LVIII would not have been possible without the partnership of the NFL, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, the Las Vegas Raiders, Clark County, our resort and hospitality partners, sponsors, donors, and all stakeholders within the Las Vegas community who stage this kind of party every year during Super Bowl weekend.

While Super Bowl LVIII is a first for Nevada, we trust it will not be our last and always look forward to hosting world-class events in a way that nobody else can. We hope you enjoy the game, celebrate in true Las Vegas fashion, and find your way back to celebrate the Super Bowl for years to come!

Viva Las Vegas. Viva the Super Bowl. It's Happening Here.

SAM JOFFRAY
President & CEO
Las Vegas Super Bowl Host Committee

"Las Vegas is a world-class destination for events and a proven leader in hospitality and entertainment. The Super Bowl is built upon a legacy of history and excellence, and our goal is to deliver an exceptional, unforgettable, and safe Super Bowl experience to all — for Las Vegas locals as well as the hundreds of thousands of visitors expected to join us. There is no place better equipped to host the Super Bowl than Las Vegas. We were built for this."

— MAURICE J. GALLAGHER JR.
Chair of the Las Vegas Super Bowl LVIII Host Committee and CEO and Chairman of Allegiant Travel Company

Super Bowl Experience, the NFL's interactive football theme park, is a family-friendly event that takes place each year during Super Bowl Week. Super Bowl Experience offers fans the opportunity to collect autographs from current NFL players and Legends, shop for merchandise from NFL Shop presented by Visa, and participate in new and enhanced interactive games and youth football clinics. Super Bowl Experience will also feature photo opportunities with the Vince Lombardi Trophy, a 40-yard dash against NFL players on LED screens, and a Super Bowl display showcasing all 57 Super Bowl rings.

Additionally, in a continuing effort to provide the best fan experience, this year's Super Bowl Experience is introducing sensory hours. From 1 p.m.-3 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 8, Super Bowl Experience will be fully operational with dim lighting and a low-noise environment to accommodate those with various ability needs and sensory sensitivities.

SUPER BOWL EXPERIENCE INFORMATION

Wednesday, Feb. 7 – Saturday, Feb. 10
MANDALAY BAY CONVENTION CENTER

HOURS OF OPERATION

February 7	3 p.m. – 10 p.m.
February 8	3 p.m. – 10 p.m.
February 9	3 p.m. – 10 p.m.
February 10	10 a.m. – 10 p.m.

TICKETS

Super Bowl Experience tickets are on sale at **SuperBowl.com/ExperienceTickets.**

Date	Adult	Age 12 & Under
February 7	$25	Free
February 8	$50	Free
February 9	$50	Free
February 10	$50	Free

SBXTRA

SBXTRA tickets ($75) include a general ticket to Super Bowl Experience presented by Toyota, which is required for entry into the event. SBXTRA gives fans priority access to their favorite Super Bowl Experience attractions all day beginning at the time slot purchased. Look for the SBXTRA sign at the following attractions:

- **Autograph Stage** (one autograph for each SBXTRA purchase)
- **Vince Lombardi Trophy** (one photo for each SBXTRA purchase)
- **Interactive Games** (unlimited access)

NFL SHOP presented by VISA

THE MAIN STORE will feature core Super Bowl products as well as specialty items, including customizable headwear. The assortment also will include all 32 NFL teams. The store is located within Super Bowl Experience and will require a ticket for access and entry.

Dates/Hours
(NFL Shop at SBX will mirror all NFL SBX Hours)
- Wednesday, Feb. 7 (3 p.m. – 10 p.m.)
- Thursday, Feb. 8 (3 p.m. – 10 p.m.)
- Friday, Feb. 9 (3 p.m. – 10 p.m.)
- Saturday, Feb. 10 (10 a.m. – 10 p.m.)

OTHER LOCATIONS/ON-LINE STORES
Other NFL Shop presented by Visa locations include The NFL Shop at Caesars Forum, Allegiant Stadium stores, and more than two dozen satellite stores. For the complete list of locations, dates, and store hours, go to **SuperBowl.com**. To shop for Super Bowl merchandise online, visit **NFLShop.com**.

ROSS D. FRANKLIN/AP IMAGES

Kaitlin Guerin, owner of Lagniappe Baking, New Orleans, LA

A work of art deserves a proper pedestal.

SIGNATURE KITCHEN SUITE

Presenting the 48-inch French Door Refrigerator by Signature Kitchen Suite

Pastry is a delicate dance of butter, flour, and technique where bakers can create edible works of art. We kept this in mind with our new 48-inch Built-in French Door Refrigerator. From dual compressors that keep temperatures within 1°F, to a 5-mode Convertible Drawer for special ingredients to all the capacity you need, it ensures the last step to the plate is as cared for as the first.

See how we respect food at every level at **SignatureKitchenSuite.com**.

True to food™

Visit our showroom near you:

RC Willey

Henderson | 702-856-8000
Summerlin | 702-515-2600
For complete list of stores, visit www.rcwilley.com

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TALK ABOUT AN ALL-PRO LINEUP

USAA's lineup is stacked with auto, home, renters, life insurance and banking.

If your spouse, parent or grandparent served in the military, they could share USAA membership with you. Then you could enjoy all the benefits of USAA, too.

Check if you're eligible today.
usaa.com/nfl

USAA | NFL

AN OFFICIAL PARTNER OF THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

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Bank products provided by USAA Federal Savings Bank, Member FDIC. No Department of Defense or government agency endorsement. © 2023 USAA 6079210.1.0124

PARAMOUNT EXPEDITION VEGAS: Journey to the Peak

Paramount Global, the broadcasting and streaming home of Super Bowl LVIII, is bringing "A Mountain of Entertainment" to Las Vegas. The four-day-long fan activation begins on Thursday, Feb. 8, and continues through Super Bowl Sunday. The "Paramount Mountain" activation will engage fans and feature brands from across the company's portfolio, including CBS, CBS Sports, Paramount+, Paramount Pictures, Nickelodeon, MTV, Comedy Central, BET, Pluto TV, and Paramount Home Entertainment.

The massive block-long structure along the Vegas strip will feature interactive fan experiences built around popular Paramount films and series, such as *Yellowstone*, *Star Trek*, *Dora the Explorer*, *Ghosts*, *Sistas*, *UEFA Champions League*, *South Park*, *SpongeBob SquarePants*, and much more.

SCAN TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT.

Those brave enough to summit "Paramount Mountain" will have the opportunity to reach its precipice through an immersive "FUNicular Experience." Voyagers will board a hyper-realistic gondola ride and ascend in a thrilling simulation, accentuated by frigid winds and harrowing heights, with their favorite Paramount characters to guide them up the Mountain's peak.

"Paramount Mountain" is located at The Mirage at 3400 South Las Vegas Blvd. in Las Vegas.

THE BEST PLAY IS PREVENTION

Start the conversation about the risks of vaping and drug use with teens now and show them they have the ultimate team behind them.

Need a game plan?

For resources and information about the harms of vaping and drug use, visit:
SAMHSA.Gov/Find-Help/atod/tobacco

If you need immediate help, call the substance abuse helpline:
1-800-662-4357

NEVADA DIVISION of PUBLIC and BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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Super Bowl Opening Night has become a popular event for fans to see players and coaches in the host city.

LIVE SHOWS/TV EVENTS

SUPER BOWL OPENING NIGHT fueled by Gatorade

Monday, Feb. 5 • Allegiant Stadium • 3 p.m. (PT) / 6 p.m. (ET)

Fans are invited to get a preview of the Allegiant Stadium campus ahead of Super Bowl LVIII and be there for Super Bowl Opening Night fueled by Gatorade, as Super Bowl players and coaches speak to the media during their only public appearance in Las Vegas before Super Bowl Sunday. Fans will be able to take part in family-friendly activities, including photo opportunities, exclusive merchandise by NFL Shop presented by Visa, and autographs from NFL players. Fans in attendance are also encouraged to download the NFL OnePass app at **NFL.com/onepass** and bring their own headphones to listen to audio from the player podiums. NFL Network's coverage of Super Bowl Opening Night begins at 7 p.m. (ET) and CBS Sports Network will televise the event starting at 8 p.m. when the first team takes the stage. Tickets, priced at $30, are available at **SuperBowl.com/OpeningNight**.

The Jets' Sauce Gardner was among the award recipients at last year's *NFL Honors*.

NFL HONORS presented by Invisalign

Thursday, Feb. 8 • Resorts World Theatre • 6 p.m. (PT) / 9 p.m. (ET)

Emmy® and Peabody Award-winning actor, writer, and producer Keegan-Michael Key returns to the stage as host of *NFL Honors* presented by Invisalign. The prime-time awards special that recognizes the NFL's best players, performances, and plays from the 2023 season will air live on CBS and NFL Network at 9 p.m. (ET) and stream on Paramount+ and NFL+. *NFL Honors* debuted in 2012 and features the announcement of The Associated Press' annual accolades, the prestigious Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year, and the newest Pro Football Hall of Fame Class. The *NFL Honors Red Carpet Show* airs at 8 p.m. on NFL Network. For more information, visit **NFL.com/honors**.

SUPER BOWL SOULFUL CELEBRATION

Wednesday, Feb. 7 • Pearl Concert Theater at Palms Casino Resort • 7:30 p.m. (PT)

25TH ANNIVERSARY

Since its inception during Super Bowl XXXIII in Miami in 1999, the Super Bowl Soulful Celebration has established a remarkable imprint during the biggest week in sports as the exclusive NFL-sanctioned multicultural program. Seamlessly blending two cherished American passions — football and music — this annual performance is celebrating its 25th anniversary in partnership with the NFL. This year's event is being hosted by Cedric the Entertainer and Tichina Arnold. CBS will air the show on Saturday, Feb. 10, at 8 p.m. (ET). For more information, visit **SuperBowlSoulful.com** or follow **@superbowlsoulful**.

Kierra Sheard-Kelly performed at last year's Super Bowl Soulful Celebration in Arizona.

MATT YORK/AP IMAGES (Top); ROSS D. FRANKLIN/AP IMAGES (Gardner); RICK SCUTERI/AP IMAGES (Bottom)

BOTOX®
onabotulinumtoxinA injection

CHRONIC MIGRAINE

BOTOX® for Chronic Migraine?

BOTOX® prevents headaches in adults with Chronic Migraine: 15 or more headache days a month, each lasting 4 hours or more. BOTOX® is not approved for 14 or fewer headache days a month.

BOTOX® prevents, on average, 8 to 9 headache days and migraine/probable migraine days a month (vs 6 to 7 for placebo).

does it work?

what about cost?

Questions about BOTOX®? It's time to ask your doctor.

INDICATION

BOTOX® (onabotulinumtoxinA) is a prescription medicine that is injected into muscles and used to prevent headaches in adults with chronic migraine who have 15 or more days each month with headache lasting 4 or more hours each day in people 18 years and older.

It is not known whether BOTOX is safe and effective to prevent headaches in patients with migraine who have 14 or fewer headache days each month (episodic migraine).

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

BOTOX may cause serious side effects that can be life threatening. Get medical help right away if you have any of these problems any time (hours to weeks) after injection of BOTOX:

- **Problems swallowing, speaking, or breathing,** due to weakening of associated muscles, can be severe and result in loss of life. You are at the highest risk if these problems are preexisting before injection. Swallowing problems may last for several months.
- **Spread of toxin effects.** The effect of botulinum toxin may affect areas away from the injection site and cause serious symptoms, including loss of strength and all-over muscle weakness; double vision; blurred vision; drooping eyelids; hoarseness or change or loss of voice; trouble saying words clearly; loss of bladder control; trouble breathing; and trouble swallowing.

There has not been a confirmed serious case of spread of toxin effect away from the injection site when BOTOX has been used at the recommended dose to treat chronic migraine.

BOTOX may cause loss of strength or general muscle weakness, vision problems, or dizziness within hours to weeks of receiving BOTOX. **If this happens, do not drive a car, operate machinery, or do other dangerous activities.**

Do not receive BOTOX if you are allergic to any of the ingredients in BOTOX (see Medication Guide for ingredients); had an allergic reaction to any other botulinum toxin product such as Myobloc® (rimabotulinumtoxinB), Dysport® (abobotulinumtoxinA), or Xeomin® (incobotulinumtoxinA); have a skin infection at the planned injection site.

The dose of BOTOX is not the same as, or comparable to, another botulinum toxin product.

Serious and/or immediate allergic reactions have been reported, including itching; rash; red, itchy welts; wheezing; asthma symptoms; dizziness; or feeling faint. Get medical help right away if you experience symptoms; further injection of BOTOX should be discontinued.

in a survey,

97%

of current BOTOX® users say they plan to keep using it!*(n=71)

and

92%

of current BOTOX® users said they wish they'd talked to a doctor and started sooner!*(n=71)

BOTOX® prevents headaches in adults with Chronic Migraine before they even start.

It's about 10 minutes of treatment once every 3 months.†

It's time to talk to your doctor about BOTOX® and ask if samples are available.

By participating in the BOTOX® Savings Program, you acknowledge and agree to the full Terms & Conditions set out at BOTOXSavingsProgram.com/TermsandConditions. Patients enrolled in Medicare, Medicaid, TRICARE, or any other government-reimbursed healthcare program are not eligible. Other restrictions and maximum limits apply.

you may pay

$0

text SAVE to 27747‡

BOTOX® onabotulinumtoxinA injection

CHRONIC MIGRAINE

BOTOXChronicMigraine.com

*2020 BOTOX® Chronic Migraine Patient Market Research BOTOX® Current Users. †BOTOX® injections are given by your doctor. ‡See Privacy & Terms: http://bit.ly/2RvxiWr. Message & data rates may apply. Message frequency may vary. Text HELP for help or STOP to end.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (continued)

Tell your doctor about all your muscle or nerve conditions, such as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease, myasthenia gravis, or Lambert-Eaton syndrome, as you may be at increased risk of serious side effects, including difficulty swallowing and difficulty breathing from typical doses of BOTOX.

Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including if you have or have had bleeding problems; have plans to have surgery; had surgery on your face; have weakness of forehead muscles, trouble raising your eyebrows, drooping eyelids, and any other abnormal facial change; are pregnant or plan to become pregnant (it is not known if BOTOX can harm your unborn baby); are breastfeeding or plan to (it is not known if BOTOX passes into breast milk).

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Using BOTOX with certain other medicines may cause serious side effects. **Do not start any new medicines until you have told your doctor that you have received BOTOX in the past.**

Tell your doctor if you received any other botulinum toxin product in the last 4 months; have received injections of botulinum toxin such as Myobloc®, Dysport®, or Xeomin® in the past (tell your doctor exactly which product you received); have recently received an antibiotic by injection; take muscle relaxants; take an allergy or cold medicine; take a sleep medicine; take aspirin-like products or blood thinners.

Other side effects of BOTOX include dry mouth; discomfort or pain at the injection site; tiredness; headache; neck pain; eye problems such as double vision, blurred vision, decreased eyesight, drooping eyelids, swelling of your eyelids, and dry eyes; drooping eyebrows; and upper respiratory tract infection.

For more information, refer to the Medication Guide or talk with your doctor.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see accompanying Summary of Information, including Boxed Warning, or visit www.rxabbvie.com/pdf/botox_pi.pdf for full Prescribing Information.

If you are having difficulty paying for your medicine, AbbVie may be able to help. Visit AbbVie.com/myAbbVieAssist to learn more.

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US-BCM-220307 01/23

abbvie

Summary of Information about BOTOX® (onabotulinumtoxinA)

What is the most important information I should know about BOTOX®?

BOTOX® may cause serious side effects that can be life threatening. Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of these problems any time (hours to weeks) after injection of BOTOX®:

- **Problems swallowing, speaking, or breathing,** due to weakening of associated muscles, can be severe and result in loss of life. You are at the highest risk if these problems are pre-existing before injection. Swallowing problems may last for several months
- **Spread of toxin effects.** The effect of botulinum toxin may affect areas away from the injection site and cause serious symptoms including: loss of strength and all-over muscle weakness, double vision, blurred vision and drooping eyelids, hoarseness or change or loss of voice, trouble saying words clearly, loss of bladder control, trouble breathing, and trouble swallowing

There has not been a confirmed serious case of spread of toxin effect away from the injection site when BOTOX® has been used at the recommended dose to treat Chronic Migraine.

BOTOX® may cause loss of strength or general muscle weakness, vision problems, or dizziness within hours to weeks of taking BOTOX®. **If this happens, do not drive a car, operate machinery, or do other dangerous activities.**

BOTOX® dosing units are not the same as, or comparable to, any other botulinum toxin product.

What is BOTOX®?

BOTOX® is prescription medicine a medical professional injects into muscles to prevent headaches in adults with chronic migraine who have 15 or more days each month with headache lasting 4 or more hours each day in people 18 years and older.

It is not known whether BOTOX® is safe or effective to prevent headaches in people with migraine who have 14 or fewer headache days each month (episodic migraine).

Who should not receive BOTOX®?

Do not receive BOTOX® if you are: allergic to any of the ingredients in BOTOX® such as botulinum toxin type A and human serum albumin; had an allergic reaction to another botulinum toxin product such as Myobloc® (rimabotulinumtoxinB), Dysport® (abobotulinumtoxinA), or Xeomin® (incobotulinumtoxinA); or have a skin infection at the planned injection site.

What should I tell my doctor before treatment?

Tell your doctor about all your muscle or nerve conditions, such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), myasthenia gravis, or Lambert-Eaton syndrome, as you may be at increased risk of serious side effects.

Tell your doctor if you have or have had breathing problems such as asthma or emphysema; swallowing problems; bleeding issues; plan to or have had surgery; have forehead muscle weakness such as trouble raising your eyebrows; drooping eyelids; or any changes to your face.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, are breastfeeding or plan to breast feed. It is not known if BOTOX® (onabotulinumtoxinA) can harm your unborn baby or if BOTOX® passes into breast milk.

What Are Common Side Effects?

The most common side effects include neck pain; headache; migraine; slight or partial facial paralysis; drooping eyebrows; eyelid drooping; bronchitis; musculoskeletal stiffness; muscular weakness; pain in 1 or more muscles, ligaments, tendons, or bones; muscle spasms; injection site pain; and high blood pressure. Other side effects have been reported including allergic reactions e.g. itching, rash, red itchy welts, wheezing, asthma symptoms, or dizziness or feeling faint.

These are not all of the possible side effects. Call your doctor for medical advice if you experience any side effects after treatment with BOTOX®.

What Should I Tell My Doctor About Medicines and Vitamins I Take?

Using BOTOX® with certain other medicines may cause serious side effects. **Do not start any new medicines until you have told your doctor that you have received BOTOX® in the past.** Tell your doctor if you have received an injection with another botulinum toxin product in the last 4 months, such as Myobloc®, Dysport®, or Xeomin®. Be sure your doctor knows which product you received.

Tell your doctor about all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements you take; recent antibiotic injections; anticholinergics; muscle relaxants; allergy or cold medicine; sleep medicine; aspirin-like products; and blood thinners. **Ask your doctor if you are not sure whether your medicine is listed above.**

To Learn More

If you would like more information, talk to your doctor and/or go to BotoxChronicMigraine.com for full Product Information.

You may report side effects to the FDA at www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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BCM69906-v4 05/20

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Xeomin® is a registered trademark of Merz Pharma GmbH & Co KGaA

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an AbbVie company

CUISINE AND CAUSES

SUPER BOWL BREAKFAST

Saturday, Feb. 10 • Caesars Palace • 8 a.m. (PT)

The NFL-sanctioned Super Bowl Breakfast has taken place in the Super Bowl host city every year since 1988, drawing sellout crowds to hear from some of sports' biggest names. The centerpiece of the breakfast will be the presentation of the 2024 Bart Starr Award to the Steelers' Minkah Fitzpatrick. The award is given annually to an NFL player who has demonstrated character and integrity in alignment with Starr's lifelong commitment to serving as a positive role model to his family, teammates, and community. The 36th annual event will unite Las Vegas business and civic leaders, sports fans from around the country, and football legends, among them Pro Football Hall of Famers and former Bart Starr Award winners. To learn more, purchase tickets, or register as a sponsor, visit **SuperBowlBreakfast.com**.

Steelers safety Minkah Fitzpatrick will be presented the 2024 Bart Starr Award at the 36th annual Super Bowl Breakfast on February 10.

TASTE OF THE NFL

Saturday, Feb. 10 • Keep Memory Alive Event Center • 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. (PT)

Taste of the NFL is the Super Bowl's largest philanthropic culinary experience and the hottest ticket in town for foodie and football fans. Guests will enjoy a tasting menu curated by over 25 talented and innovative chefs, both nationally renowned and locally loved. Hosted by culinary superstars Andrew Zimmern, Carla Hall, Tim Love, Lasheeda Perry, and Mark Bucher, along with appearances by 30+ NFL greats, Taste of the NFL will offer guests a bite of the best of Super Bowl LVIII! All event proceeds support GENYOUth, a leading national nonprofit dedicated to helping school children thrive by living a well-nourished and physically active life. Funds will be distributed to schools in Nevada and all 32 NFL markets to increase access to and participation in school meals among youth in at-risk communities, helping to #EndStudentHunger. Presented by Frito-Lay, Quaker, and the PepsiCo Foundation. Taste of the NFL welcomes guests ages 21+. Tickets are available at **TasteoftheNFL.com**.

Hall of Fame defensive back Charles Woodson was among the NFL greats who participated in last year's Taste of the NFL event.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

29th ANNUAL Rebuilding Together. KICKOFF TO REBUILD

SANCTIONED EVENT

Friday, Feb. 9 • Henderson, Nevada • 7:30 a.m. (PT)

In partnership with Lowe's, the Official Home Improvement Retail Sponsor of the NFL, Rebuilding Together will provide essential home repairs for six families and other improvements in Henderson's Valley View neighborhood, including new paint for a gymnasium at the local Boys & Girls Club of Southern Nevada, as part of Kickoff to Rebuild. This annual Super Bowl-sanctioned event is hosted by Rebuilding Together, a leading national housing nonprofit with a mission to repair the homes of people in need and revitalize communities. The local nonprofit affiliate, Rebuilding Together Southern Nevada, will lead this year's efforts. For 29 years, Rebuilding Together has worked in Super Bowl cities across the country to rebuild homes and bring neighborhoods together. To date, through Kickoff to Rebuild, Rebuilding Together has repaired more than 176 homes, engaged more than 5,200 volunteers, and invested $6 million in communities nationwide. Learn more at **rebuildingtogether.org/ktr**.

DON WRIGHT/AP IMAGES (Fitzpatrick)

28 million people
are trafficked, all around
the world, on any given day.
The hotel industry stands together against
human trafficking, in all its forms.
GIVE

We have No Room for Trafficking.

AHLA Foundation supports the hotel and lodging industry's greatest asset – our people. Alongside our work championing the industry's workforce, we are deeply committed to supporting survivors and participating in human trafficking prevention efforts in the hotel and lodging industry through our No Room for Trafficking initiative.

Aimbridge · Choice Hotels · Extended Stay America · 6 motel + studio · Hilton Global Foundation

Hyatt Hotels Foundation · IHG Hotels & Resorts · The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation · Marriott International · real Hospitality Group

Red Roof · Sonesta International Hotels · Summit Foundation · Vision Hospitality Group · Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

AHLA Foundation

NO ROOM FOR TRAFFICKING
An AHLA Foundation Initiative

NFL NETWORK

We're Live from Las Vegas

For the first time ever, the Super Bowl heads to Las Vegas — and NFL Network is there to be your one-stop shop for everything surrounding Super Bowl LVIII!

NFL Network provides extensive, on-location Super Bowl Week coverage for the 21st time, this year offering more than 80 hours of live programming starting Monday, Feb. 5, through Super Bowl Sunday on Feb. 11.

On Super Bowl Sunday, *NFL GameDay Morning* is live from Allegiant Stadium starting at 9 a.m. (ET), kicking off more than eight hours of coverage leading up to the game — hosted by Rich Eisen, Kurt Warner, Michael Irvin, Steve Mariucci, Gerald McCoy, Ian Rapoport, Cynthia Frelund, Kimmi Chex, Mike Garafolo, Tom Pelissero, and others. Following the game, *NFL GameDay Final* provides postgame analysis and interviews with the Super Bowl LVIII champions.

Throughout the week, wake up with *Good Morning Football* (Monday-Friday at 7 a.m.) hosted by Jamie Erdahl, Jason McCourty, Peter Schrager, Kyle Brandt, and Will Selva. *Super Bowl Live* (Monday-Saturday at 1 p.m.) provides full coverage of the Super Bowl, including interviews, analysis, and all the news from NFL Network talent based in various locations throughout Las Vegas. Recap the day's action each evening with special editions of *NFL Total Access* at 7 p.m., hosted by Kimmi Chex and Mike Yam.

On Monday, Feb. 5, NFL Network provides comprehensive coverage of Super Bowl Opening Night when the two teams address the media for the first time ahead of Super Bowl LVIII.

NFL Network, CBS, and Paramount+ will also carry live coverage of the *NFL Honors* awards show, hosted by Keegan-Michael Key, on Thursday, Feb. 8, beginning with the *NFL Honors Red Carpet Show* at 8 p.m.

Additional prime-time specials on NFL Network during the week include *NFL GameDay View* (Friday, Feb. 9, at 8 p.m.), *The Hall of Fame Knocks: Welcome to Canton* (Saturday, Feb. 10, at 9 p.m.), *Super Bowl LVIII Countdown* (Saturday, Feb. 10, at 10 p.m.), and more.

For more programming details and information on all of NFL Network's Super Bowl LVIII coverage, visit **NFL.com/nflnetwork** and follow **@NFLMedia** on X.

STEVE LUCIANO/AP IMAGES

NFL ONE PASS

NFL OnePass is the premier event app for the NFL that gives fans "Know Before You Go" information, enables fans to register for all attractions, and purchase and see event tickets within the app.

NFL OnePass provides access to all Super Bowl LVIII Week event information, the opportunity to get involved with an array of activities, and is your go-to guide for gameday!

Please note that NFL OnePass is required to participate in any interactive games on site. Fans who download and register for the NFL OnePass app will also be entered for a chance to win a pair of tickets to Super Bowl LVIII.

For any questions about the app, please contact **OnePass@NFL.com** or visit **NFL.com/onepass** to download today!

Stay on top of all the excitement and activities of Super Bowl Week by following **@SuperBowl** or the Host Committee at **@LVSuperBowlHC** on social media. For questions, use the hashtag **#SBLVIII**.

NFL PLAY FOOTBALL FAMILY FESTIVAL

The NFL is hosting its annual Play Football Family Festival on Saturday, Feb. 10, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Desert Oasis High School (6600 W. Erie Ave., Las Vegas).

More than 1,000 student-athletes are expected to attend the festival, which is open to football fans of all ages and is free of charge. Pre-registration is required and available at eventbrite.com.

The event will feature autographs, football clinics, and partner and Las Vegas Raiders activations. From additional photo opportunities, a live DJ, giveaways, food trucks, and interactive activations from Riddell, Oakley, and more, the festival will celebrate the football community, coaches, and players who bring passion, fun, and excitement to the sport.

Along with the football-related activities, the Play Football Family Festival aims to unite youth and high school football communities, drive positive conversations centered on the values of the game, celebrate the importance of youth and high school football coaches, and highlight girls flag football.

To learn more about the Play Football program, go to **playfootball.NFL.com** or follow **@PlayFootball** on social media.

CBS Sports Sets the Super Bowl Standard

Jim Nantz (left), Tracy Wolfson (center), and Tony Romo will lead CBS Sports' broadcast coverage of Super Bowl LVIII from Las Vegas.

CBS Sports is set to present its 22nd Super Bowl — the most by any network — with multi-platform coverage of Super Bowl LVIII from Las Vegas, featuring CBS Sports' presentation on CBS and Paramount+, and a slime-filled telecast exclusively on Nickelodeon.

For the third time as an announce team, Jim Nantz and Tony Romo will call the Super Bowl, with reporters Tracy Wolfson, Evan Washburn, Jay Feely, and rules analyst Gene Steratore.

In the first-ever Super Bowl alternate telecast, SpongeBob SquarePants (voiced by Tom Kenny) and Patrick Star (voiced by Bill Fagerbakke) will join analyst Nate Burleson and play-by-play announcer Noah Eagle to call the game on Nickelodeon. Sandy Cheeks (voiced by Carolyn Lawrence), Young Dylan, and Dylan Schefter will report live from Allegiant Stadium, while Larry the Lobster (voiced by Mr. Lawrence), Dora the Explorer (voiced by Diana Zermeño), and Boots (voiced by Asher Colton Spence) will also contribute.

The NFL Today will provide pregame, halftime, and postgame coverage, anchored by James Brown, alongside analysts Phil Simms, Bill Cowher, Nate Burleson, Boomer Esiason, JJ Watt, and Lead NFL Insider Jonathan Jones. Ian Eagle, Charles Davis, Matt Ryan, Jason McCourty, and others will also contribute.

CBS Sports' seven hours of Super Bowl Sunday pregame coverage will begin at 11:30 a.m. (ET) on CBS and Paramount+, highlighted by Nickelodeon's *NFL Slimetime*; NFL Films' *Road to the Super Bowl*; *You Are Looking Live*, an original documentary on the story behind the iconic *NFL Today* studio show; a four-hour edition of *The NFL Today*; and the *Super Bowl on CBS Kickoff Show*. Following the game, CBS will air *The NFL Today Postgame Show*, with extended postgame coverage continuing on CBS Sports Network and CBS Sports HQ.

CBS Sports Network is offering coverage throughout Super Bowl Week, highlighted by *Super Bowl Live*, *That Other Pregame Show*, *NFL Monday QB*, *We Need to Talk*, *Super Bowl Weekend*, *The Jim Rome Show*, *Time to Schein*, and *HQ Spotlight*. Digital coverage includes more than 40 hours of programming all week on CBS Sports HQ, culminating with an extended Super Bowl LVIII postgame show.

WESTWOOD ONE IS THE RADIO HOME OF THE SUPER BOWL

For the 37th consecutive year and 51st time overall, Westwood One will serve as the exclusive network radio home of the Super Bowl. Beginning at 5 p.m. (ET), Kevin Harlan and Super Bowl XXXIV MVP and Hall of Fame quarterback Kurt Warner will call the action to millions of listeners tuned in across approximately 700 radio stations nationwide, in 175 countries, and more than 200 ships at sea via the American Forces Radio Network. Fans also can hear the broadcast streamed on **westwoodonesports.com** and affiliated stations' primary digital platforms, and via the NFL OnePass app. Coverage will also be available on SiriusXM and NFL+.

This is Harlan's 14th Super Bowl broadcast for the network and Warner's sixth. Fox Sports rules analyst and former NFL officiating senior vice president Dean Blandino will join them in the radio broadcast booth.

Kevin Harlan (left) and Kurt Warner

The award-winning Laura Okmin and former NFL defensive lineman Mike Golic will serve as sideline reporters. Scott Graham and three-time Super Bowl champion Devin McCourty will host Westwood One's pregame, halftime, and postgame coverage live from Allegiant Stadium, with Devin's twin brother and fellow Super Bowl champion Jason McCourty and former NFL offensive lineman Ross Tucker also contributing to the pregame coverage.

Westwood One SPORTS

Westwood One's broadcast day kicks off at 2 p.m. (ET) with *Super Bowl Preview*. *Super Bowl Insider* begins at 3 p.m., and *Super Sunday* follows at 4 p.m.

Howard Deneroff is the executive producer of the Super Bowl broadcast on Westwood One. This is his 35th Super Bowl with the network. Mike Eaby is the coordinating producer. Aaron Cummins and Brian Finkelstein will produce the pregame, halftime, and postgame shows.

Westwood One Sports is home to some of the most exciting sports broadcasts in audio. In addition to being the exclusive network radio partner to the NFL, its other properties include NCAA basketball, including the NCAA men's and women's tournaments and the Final Four; The Masters; NCAA football; and other marquee sports events. Westwood One also distributes and represents CBS Sports Radio.

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NFL

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Considered the league's most prestigious honor, the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award presented by Nationwide recognizes an NFL player for outstanding community service activities off the field, as well as excellence on the field. First established in 1970, the national award was renamed in 1999 after the late Hall of Fame Chicago Bears running back Walter Payton.

All 32 team winners are being highlighted as nominees and recognized for their important work during the week leading up to Super Bowl LVIII. The 2023 Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year will be announced during the *NFL Honors* awards show on Thursday, Feb. 8, and all 32 winners will be recognized on gameday at Allegiant Stadium.

Each nominee will receive up to $55,000. The recipient of the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award will receive up to a $250,000 donation to the charity of their choice. All donations are courtesy of the NFL Foundation and Nationwide.

Beginning in 2017, the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year trophy silhouette came to life in uniform elements to further recognize past award winners and current nominees. The three current players who have won the award — Calais Campbell, Russell Wilson, and Dak Prescott — wear a Man of the Year patch on their jerseys to recognize their outstanding contributions to the game and to their communities. All 2023 nominees wore a Man of the Year helmet decal beginning in Week 14 in recognition of their accomplishments on and off the field.

Learn more about this year's 32 team nominees, their community service, and the history of the Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year Award by visiting **NFL.com/manoftheyear**.

SUPER BOWL TICKET GIVEAWAY

The National Football League's Super Bowl Ticket Giveaway Program thanks the league's most passionate and dedicated fans by offering tickets to the NFL's biggest event of the season, the Super Bowl. Each season, players from all 32 NFL clubs, Commissioner Roger Goodell, NFL Legends, celebrities, and influencers give away more than 500 tickets in surprise and delight moments throughout the season up until the day before the game.

The Giants' Jalin Hyatt surprised New York-area women's flag football league founders Katie DiChiaro (left) and Jenn Kisslinger with Super Bowl LVIII tickets.

In its seventh year, the program has provided thousands of fans with the opportunity to attend the Super Bowl, while also highlighting their dedication to their local communities and clubs. Recipients include youth football players and coaches, those who have served in our Armed Forces, cancer survivors, fans who have overcome adversity, and dedicated community leaders.

GREGORY PAYAN/AP IMAGES; EMILY HENDERSON

NFL PLAY:60

Super Kid
BRANDON TORQUATO

Brandon Torquato is from Las Vegas, Nev., and is an athlete in Special Olympics — one of the league's NFL PLAY 60 partners. Brandon is this year's NFL PLAY 60 Super Kid and is attending a number of events throughout Super Bowl Week, and on gameday will deliver the game ball to the officials to start the third quarter in Super Bowl LVIII. Brandon was chosen because of his involvement in Unified flag football. Special Olympics Unified Sports provides opportunities for people with and without intellectual disabilities to play on the same team. For more information on the NFL's partnership with Special Olympics, visit **SpecialOlympics.org**.

PREGAME FLYOVER

The flyover for Super Bowl LVIII is being conducted by the Air Force's premier air demonstration team, the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds. As America's Ambassadors in Blue, the Thunderbirds travel the world to recruit, retain, and inspire people to pursue excellence in the name of service to something greater than themselves. The Thunderbirds showcase the pride, precision, and professionalism of the United States Air Force.

Don't just watch the flyover at this year's Super Bowl, be a part of it. Scan this QR code to see yourself in the cockpit with the Thunderbirds! Switch to your phone's rear camera and see the flyover happen right in front of you!

Pregame Performances

Multi-media entertainment mogul **Reba McEntire** will sing the national anthem prior to Super Bowl LVIII. A household name through a successful career that includes music, television, film, theater, retail, and hospitality, McEntire is a Country Music Hall of Fame and Hollywood Bowl member who has more than 50 award wins under her belt, including honors from the ACM Awards, American Music Awards, People's Choice Awards, CMA Awards, Grammy Awards, and GMA Dove Awards.

Post Malone, the eight-time diamond-certified, Grammy-nominated phenomenon, will sing "America the Beautiful." Since emerging in 2015 with a genre-less brew that inspired a movement, he has delivered the diamond-selling "Congratulations" [feat. Quavo], achieved back-to-back No. 1 debuts on the *Billboard* Top 200, received countless multi-platinum certifications around the world, and smashed one record after another with his Hot 100-topping hits.

Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter, activist, and acclaimed actress **Andra Day** will sing "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Initially known for her 2016 Grammy-nominated behemoth "Rise Up," which amassed over one billion streams and an RIAA triple-platinum certification, Day has performed alongside numerous global artists and stars. Her feature acting debut in *The United States vs. Billie Holiday* earned her a Golden Globe for Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture Drama and a nomination for Best Actress at the Oscars.

On behalf of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), actor **Daniel Durant**, who starred in the Academy Award-winning movie *CODA*, will perform the national anthem in American Sign Language (ASL); actress, model, and dancer **Anjel Piñero** will sign "America the Beautiful"; and **Shaheem Sanchez**, actor and choreographer, will sign "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Sanchez will perform the ASL rendition of the *Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show*.

GAMEDAY EXPERIENCE presented by Bud Light

All Super Bowl LVIII ticket holders are invited to Gameday Experience presented by Bud Light at Allegiant Stadium, beginning at 11:30 a.m. (PT) when the Stadium Campus opens. Enjoy attractions, including iconic photo opportunities, the Vince Lombardi Trophy, the full collection of 57 Super Bowl Rings, exclusive merchandise at NFL Shop presented by Visa, food and beverage for purchase, Super Bowl entertainment, and fan rally zones.

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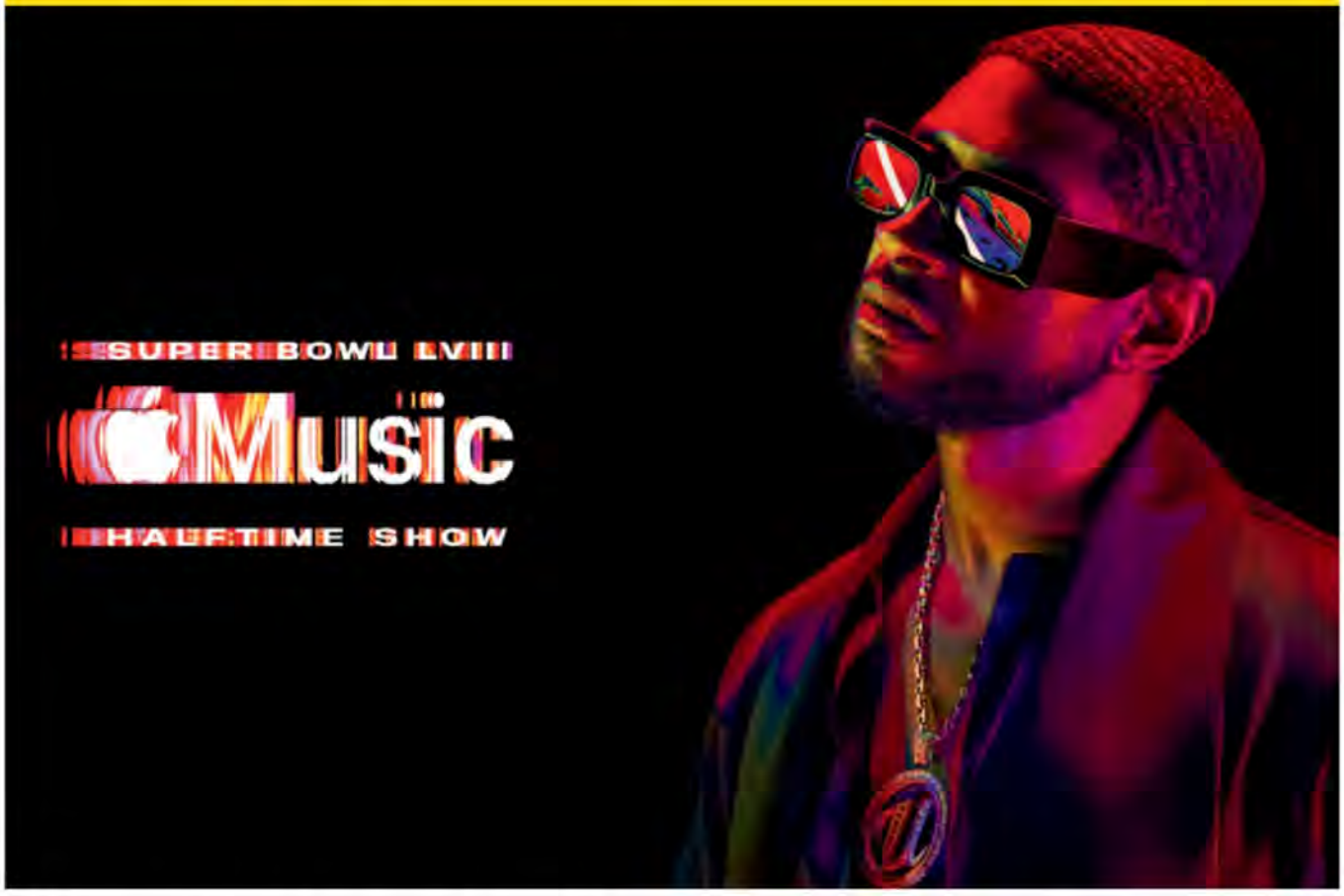

Usher Continues His 'Remarkable Journey'

One of the most influential artists of a generation, Usher, will perform during the *Apple Music Super Bowl LVIII Halftime Show*.

"It's an honor of a lifetime to finally check a Super Bowl performance off my bucket list. I can't wait to bring the world a show unlike anything else they've seen from me before," Usher said. "Thank you to the fans and everyone who made this opportunity happen."

Usher has changed music, culture, and countless lives. The multiple Grammy Award-winning diamond-selling international megastar, actor, dancer, entrepreneur, and philanthropist is set to inspire change yet again in 2024 and beyond.

In addition to selling over 80 million records worldwide and collecting dozens of awards, he has simultaneously lit up the small screen on NBC's *The Voice* and the big screen in blockbusters such as *Hustlers*. He has also tirelessly distinguished himself as a devout humanitarian, raising tens of millions of dollars for various causes and uplifting youth via his New Look Foundation. Since 1999, he has been providing opportunities for young people in underserved communities and enabling them to flourish and achieve seemingly impossible dreams.

A longtime supporter and Global Citizen Ambassador, Usher has performed at events since 2015 raising awareness to defeat poverty, defend the planet, and demand equity. A true outlier, he is equally at home on the stage of his sold-out *My Way Las Vegas* residency as he was on a 2016 government cultural mission to Cuba as part of President Barack Obama's Presidential Committee for Arts and Humanities.

"Usher is an icon whose music has left an indelible mark on the cultural landscape throughout his career; we couldn't be more excited to have him headline this year's *Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show*," said Seth Dudowsky, NFL head of music. "We look forward to working with Usher, Roc Nation, and Apple Music to bring fans another Halftime Show for the history books."

"Usher is the ultimate artist and showman. Ever since his debut at the age of 15, he's been charting his own unique course. Beyond his flawless singing and exceptional choreography, Usher bares his soul," said Shawn "JAY-Z" Carter, whose Roc Nation will serve as strategic entertainment advisors of the live performance. "His remarkable journey has propelled him to one of the grandest stages in the world. I can't wait to see the magic."

"The *Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show* is one of the most highly anticipated music events of the year, and we're excited to bring this legendary show to fans all over the world in Spatial Audio, along with tons of exclusive videos, interviews, playlists, and so much more across Apple Music," said Oliver Schusser, vice president of Apple Music, Apple TV+, Sports, and Beats. "We are so proud of what we were able to accomplish together with the NFL and Roc Nation last year, and now with the insanely talented Usher set to take the stage, we're looking forward to another incredible Halftime Show from one of the world's all-time greatest performers."

The *Apple Music Super Bowl LVIII Halftime Show* telecast will be produced by DPS with Roc Nation and Jesse Collins serving as executive producers, and Hamish Hamilton serving as director.

In 2023, the *Apple Music Super Bowl LVII Halftime Show* starring Rihanna became the most-watched halftime performance of all time and garnered five Creative Arts Emmy nominations, including for Outstanding Variety Special (LIVE).

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A Matter of Style

WITH EXAMPLES THAT RANGE FROM SCRAMBLERS TO SLINGERS, THERE'S MORE THAN ONE BLUEPRINT FOR BUILDING A SUPER BOWL-WINNING QUARTERBACK.

BY MIKE GARAFOLO

IT IS ARGUABLY THE HARDEST POSITION IN ALL OF SPORTS. The one that comes with the most pressure and requires the most time to prepare. The one that forces a player to make the right decision in mere seconds or get hit hard by a 300-pounder. The one that results in the most blame when things go wrong but the riches, glory, and hardware when it goes oh, so right.

The one that looks easy to the great ones and downright impossible to those who underestimate it.

"If there's one thing I can't stand," Hall of Fame coach Bill Parcells once said, "it's a quarterback who thinks playing quarterback is just about passing."

It doesn't take a two-time Super Bowl-winning coach to understand there's much more to playing quarterback in the NFL. It's a common exercise in the media to try building the perfect quarterback — Dan Marino's arm, Michael Vick's legs, Joe Montana's brain, etc.

Joe Montana's ability to dissect a defense with his quick, accurate throws helped lift the 49ers to four Super Bowl titles. He was named MVP in three of those victories.

With Super Bowl LVIII set to kick off, we decided to look at the quarterbacks who have won multiple rings and assess which traits they employed to reach NFL greatness. While realizing these legends had well-rounded skill sets, each had a unique style of play that helped them win titles and, in most cases, earn a Hall of Fame jacket. Put them all together and, sure, you'd build the perfect quarterback.

Reading the Field

When it comes to quarterback, Montana wrote the book.

Seriously, he wrote one — *Joe Montana's Art and Magic of Quarterbacking* — which reveals the 49ers legend's philosophy. Among his pointers, Montana notes how quickly a quarterback should read a defense.

"By the time you've taken your second step back from center, you should already know who you're throwing to," he writes. "That's right, two steps."

Montana was a master at understanding immediately what the defense's vulnerabilities were. Often, that area wasn't far from the line of scrimmage.

"It didn't bother me a bit to throw 10 yards to Jerry Rice and let him run 65," wrote Montana, who threw 11 touchdowns and zero interceptions in four Super Bowl wins. "Six points is six points."

Likewise, Troy Aikman wasted no time processing the field. The Cowboys Hall of Famer displayed stellar decision-making on his way to six Pro Bowls and three Super Bowl titles.

"If I called the same play 10 times and the read took him to the same guy, he'd throw it to the same guy 10 times and not even blink, not even worry about it," says Norv Turner, Aikman's offensive coordinator from 1991-93. "That's the read."

The bigger the game, the sharper Aikman's reads were.

Not that Aikman dinked and dunked his way down the field. The former No. 1 overall pick had a big arm — so big the coaches told him to throttle it down at times. Aikman did that on his first touchdown pass to Michael Irvin in Super Bowl XXVII, when he laid the ball inches over Bills linebacker Cornelius Bennett's hand.

"When you're young and have that kind of arm, you want to use it," Turner says. "It's nice to know it's there when you need it, but there are a lot of ways to get it done.

"Some of these big-arm guys never figure that out."

Troy Aikman developed the decision-making skills that frustrated opponents and keyed the Cowboys' run to three Super Bowl championships in a four-year span.

Previous page: AL MESSERSCHMIDT/AP IMAGES. This page: PAUL POPPER/GETTY IMAGES

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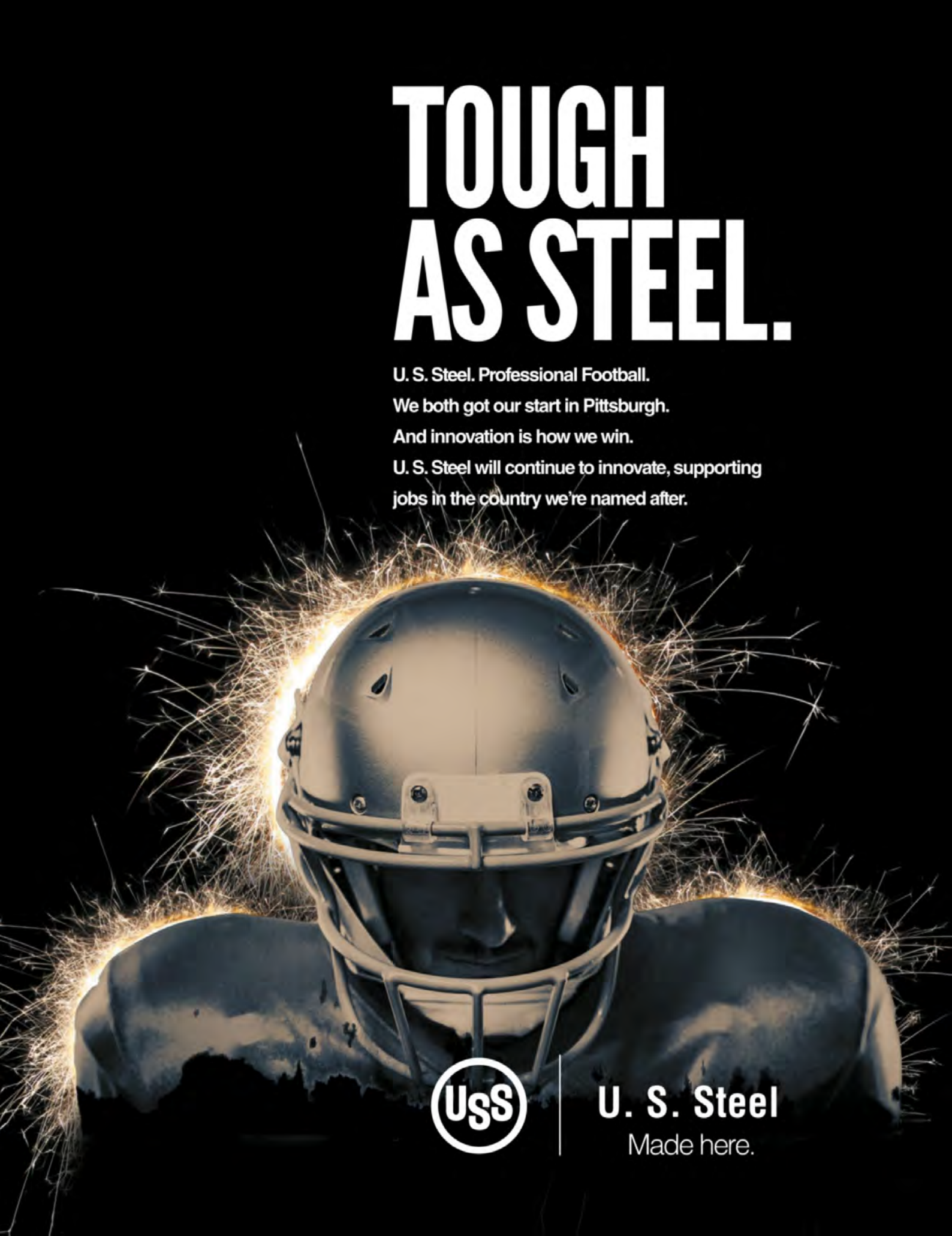

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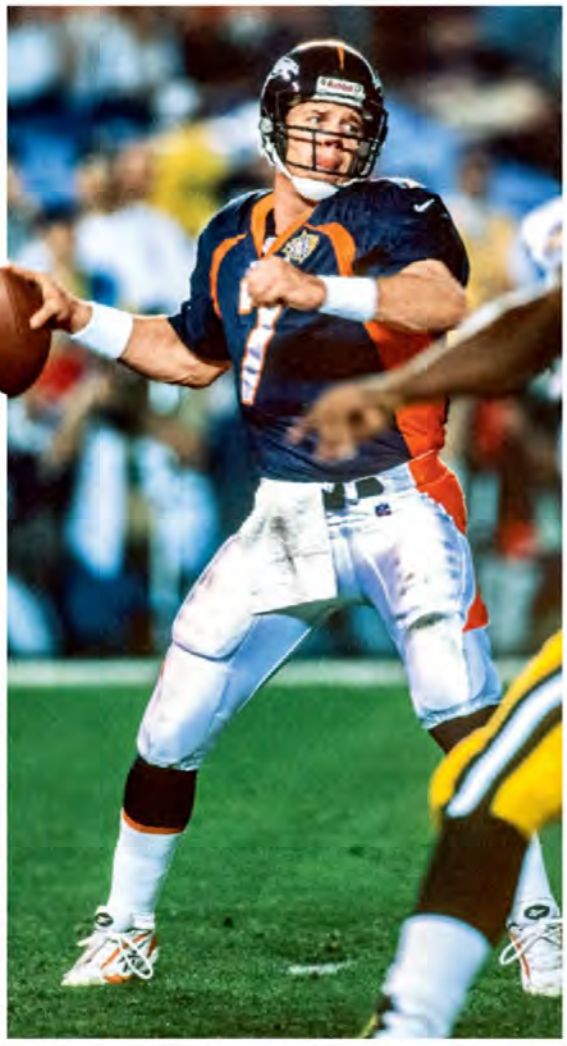

Big Arms

With deep-ball threat Terry Bradshaw (left) behind center, the Steelers became the NFL's team of the '70s, winning four Super Bowls in a six-year span. John Elway (above) was a superb athlete whose passing prowess and clutch runs carried the Broncos to back-to-back Super Bowl titles.

Terry Bradshaw did. Eventually.

"My nature was attack. Throw it deep," Bradshaw told a roaring crowd at his Hall of Fame induction in 1989. "Anybody can throw wide. ... Throw it deep! Let's go deep!

"Intercepted."

Bradshaw set a national record in high school by throwing the javelin 245 feet, so it's not surprising he preferred the long passes. Through the first five seasons of his career, that led to a 48-to-81 touchdown-to-interception ratio.

After a few rule changes in the mid-'70s to help offenses and passing games, Bradshaw's numbers flipped (164 TDs to 129 INTs the rest of his career) and he connected on many deep balls, including a 64-yard TD to Lynn Swann that traveled 63 yards in the air to help seal the victory over the Cowboys in Super Bowl X.

Speaking of X, that used to mark the spot on John Elway's receivers. The "Elway Cross" would often form on a player's chest if he tried to catch a pass from the Broncos' quarterback with his body.

"They used to set the JUGS machine at 70-80 mph for us receivers to simulate John's throws," former Broncos receiver Rod Smith told the *Denver Post* in 2008.

Elway's arm strength made him a No. 1 overall pick in the NFL and a second-round selection of the New York Yankees in baseball. There was much more to Elway's game, such as the running ability he showed on his helicopter-spin scramble in Super Bowl XXXII, but passers who can throw it hard always take pride in that ability.

"I can (still) sling it," a 53-year-old Elway said in 2013 when asked if he could make an NFL comeback. "I just can't get hit."

Another top draft pick from Stanford could sling it, as well.

Jim Plunkett, the Patriots' selection to begin the 1971 NFL Draft, had all the physical tools to succeed in New England, including a live arm that could throw the ball 70 yards. Yet only after signing with the Raiders did Plunkett experience an increase in individual performance (career highs with 2,935 passing yards and 20 TDs in 1983) and team success (wins in Super Bowls XV and XVIII).

Though perhaps Plunkett belongs in the next section of this story because it was about more than talent for him.

"Plunkett is like Rocky Marciano; he's going to get hit," Raiders owner Al Davis said after Super Bowl XVIII. "You could knock Marciano down in the sixth round, but he'd always come back to knock you out."

DAVID DUROCHIK/AP IMAGES (Bradshaw); FOCUS ON SPORT/GETTY IMAGES (Elway)

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– Riley Green

American country music singer and songwriter

Tough Guys

Jerry Kramer remembers when Bart Starr stamped himself as the Packers' franchise quarterback.

The young man who initially seemed "colorless, odorless, tasteless" to Kramer during his first five seasons showed his toughness against the Bears in 1961 after unleashing a rare deep ball.

"Bill George is not watching the ball. He's coming," Kramer recalls of the Chicago linebacker. "He hits Bart in the mouth with a forearm. Knocks him on his backside. Cuts his top lip up into his nose. Bart starts bleeding like a faucet. Bill George says, 'That ought to take care of you.'

"Bart used the F-word for the only time in 40 years of knowing him and says, 'Bleep you, we're coming after you.'"

They did, and won, 24-0. Starr remained the Packers' starter for the next decade, leading the team to five NFL championships and two Super Bowl titles.

Many assume quarterbacks aren't as tough as they were in Starr's day. Two passers drafted only 10 picks apart in 2004 would beg to differ.

One is Eli Manning, whose stoic demeanor and awkward expressions on the sideline (e.g. "Eli Face") masked his physical and mental toughness, particularly early in his career when he was getting pounded by pass rushers and criticized by the New York media.

Things changed in 2007 when doctors told Manning he'd miss four weeks with a separated shoulder. He didn't miss a game amid a streak of 210 consecutive starts that lasted until 2017.

Eli Manning started 210 consecutive games during a career that saw him quarterback the Giants to a pair of Super Bowl victories, including Super Bowl XLII over a Patriots team that was one win away from a perfect season.

Months later, he shrugged off two Patriots before throwing deep to David Tyree for the "Helmet Catch" in Super Bowl XLII. Four years after that, Manning's chinstrap was under his nose and his shoulder pad was sticking out following one of many hits by 49ers defenders in the rain-soaked NFC Championship Game. He still had the wherewithal to call timeout in that moment, leading to a victory ahead of the Giants' second Super Bowl win over New England.

"Both NFC Championship Games, in horrible conditions, his performances were epic," says Shaun O'Hara, Manning's center for the first seven years of his career. "It was minus-23 wind chill in Lambeau (in 2008) and not one time did I hear him say he was cold."

Manning's draft classmate Ben Roethlisberger earned his "Big Ben" nickname by standing tall in the pocket — all 6-5, 240 pounds of him — no matter what the defense brought his way.

Roethlisberger consistently held on to the football longer than any quarterback in recent memory, even with pass rushers getting bigger and faster each year. Former Steelers offensive coordinator Bruce Arians recalled Roethlisberger shaking off linebacker Willie McGinest and running 30 yards for a touchdown in 2007.

"He never gave up on a play," Arians says. "Ben was going to make something happen."

Roethlisberger made a comeback victory happen against the Cardinals in Super Bowl XLIII with his signature style of play. On the game-winning touchdown pass to Santonio Holmes, he pumped twice, directed Holmes to the corner, and threw a perfect pass over three defenders.

"I'll take Ben in a big game in a 2-minute drill over just about anybody," Arians says.

MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP IMAGES

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Preparation Guys

If Montana wrote the book on quarterbacking, Tom Brady and Peyton Manning read it. Again. And again. And again. And again ....

"Tom and Peyton, their preparation, they couldn't have any stone unturned," says Arians, who coached one Hall of Famer in Manning and has two more pupils on the way in Brady and Roethlisberger. "You had to be ready to answer every question that could possibly happen in the game. When they were comfortable, shoot, nobody was better."

Manning required little window dressing to attack a defense. He had dissected the opposing scheme, personnel, and players' body language so thoroughly leading up to the game that he preferred no pre-snap motion and receiver Marvin Harrison to always be lined up wide right.

"If you have an hour meeting with Peyton," Arians says, "you'd better have two hours worth of [stuff]."

Brady was also maniacal in his preparation, which helped the boy who grew up a 49ers fan follow Montana's credo of knowing where he was going with the football shortly after the snap. Brady's quick release frustrated many pass rushers over his 23-year career, including the Seahawks' Michael Bennett in Super Bowl XLIX. If not for Brady's quick throws that day, Bennett's four hits on the quarterback would have been sacks.

Peyton Manning (top) studied defenses in such detail prior to taking the field that he didn't rely on pre-snap motion to create mismatches on a play. Tom Brady (bottom) brought game preparation to the next level during a career that produced seven Super Bowl wins.

"To have a guy that's been there and done it walk into a team that didn't know how good it was," Arians says of the Buccaneers team that beat the Chiefs in Super Bowl LV after Brady signed as a free agent. "Tommy just solidified it."

Just like how another quarterback in Florida solidified a team decades earlier.

Bob Griese knew what kind of talent he had around him on the Dolphins, so he never tried to do too much, which earned Don Shula's trust. The legendary head coach let Griese call plays through the quarterback's final season of 1980.

The heady Griese, who looked like a professor with his eyeglasses under his face mask and was nicknamed "Straight Arrow" by his teammates for his wholesome lifestyle, learned early in his career that watching film was the key to success. Shula noted Griese took as much pride in calling a successful run play as he did a long pass.

"Bob had the perfect mental approach," said Shula, whose '72 Dolphins were just that — perfect. "He was the master of the position of quarterback. He knew the people and how to use them. He knew defenses inside and out."

ALEX BRANDON/AP IMAGES (Manning); DAVID GOLDMAN/AP IMAGES (Brady)

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Roger Staubach was able to keep plays alive with his legs, serving as the prototype for quarterbacks who didn't solely rely on their arms to succeed.

The Scramblers

The scramble drills that are commonplace in NFL practices these days have existed for some time. Tom Landry had the '70s Cowboys run them with Roger Staubach at the helm.

"But only on Friday," Dallas Hall of Fame wide receiver Drew Pearson recalls, "which meant Coach Landry didn't want him to do too much running."

Nonetheless, "Roger the Dodger" didn't get his nickname by hanging in the pocket and taking sacks if there were plays to be made with his legs.

Staubach ducked, juked, and reversed field in ways Randall Cunningham and Vick would do decades later. He rushed for a career-high 343 yards in the Cowboys' first Super Bowl title season in 1971 but only once topped the NFL in rushing yards for a quarterback (320 yards in 1974) while leading the NFC in passing five times.

Meaning he was often scrambling to set up a pass.

"Coach Landry tried to restrict [scrambling] a little," Pearson recalls, "but he didn't want to restrict Roger's instincts."

The active quarterback with the best instincts is surely Patrick Mahomes. Though he claimed in the Netflix *Quarterback* series he's not much of a scrambler, he has a long highlight reel of no-look passes, left-handed throws, a perfect pass while horizontal after being tripped up, and a tuck-and-run (see his 26-yard rush on a bad ankle against the Eagles in last year's Super Bowl).

A former Detroit Tigers draft pick, Mahomes says his unorthodox passes are "baseball throws." He perfects them in practice and tailors his workouts to provide the strength and flexibility to play off-script.

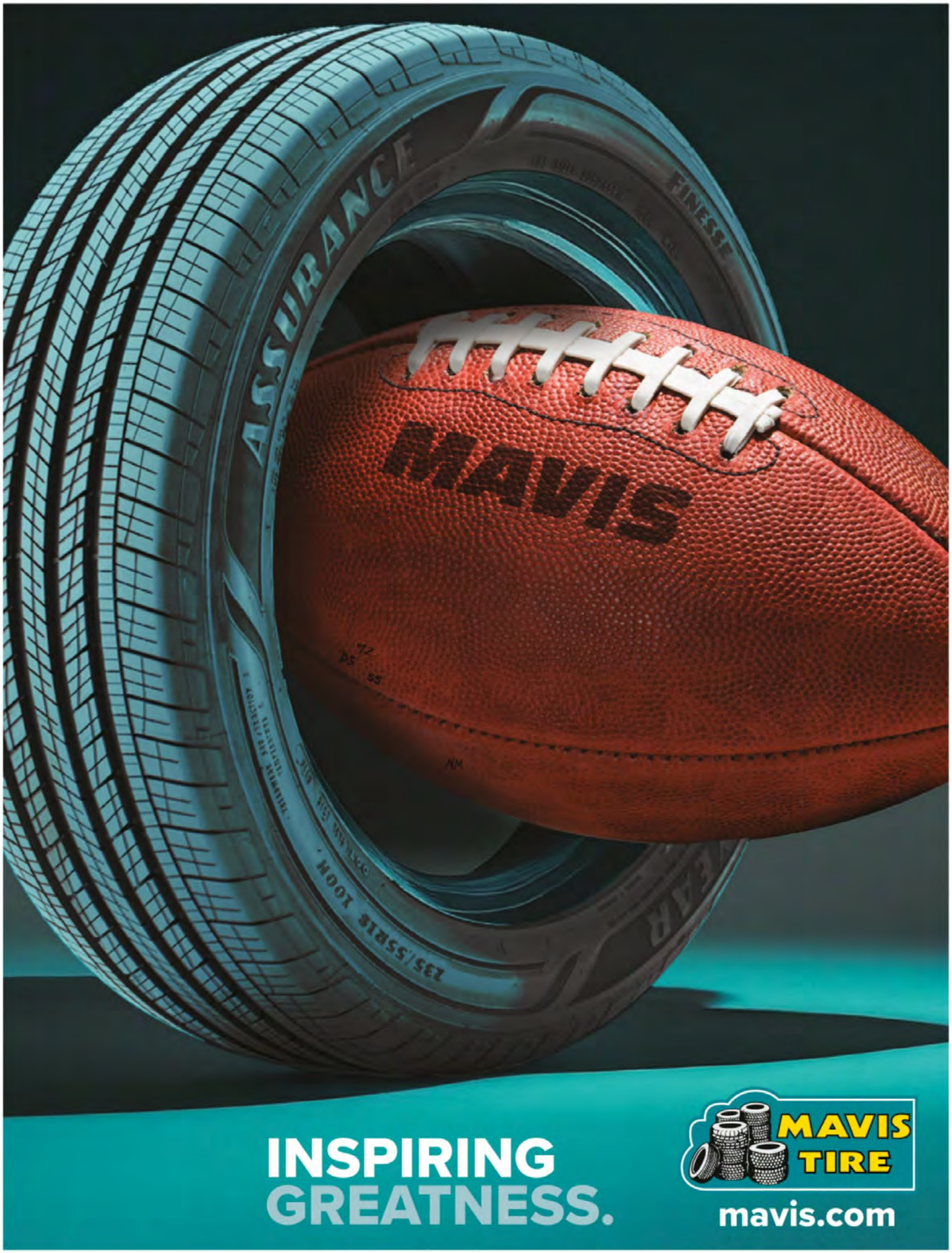
But Mahomes knows his escapability will wane with age. Already a voracious film watcher, he wants to dissect defenses so he can make quicker decisions, a la Brady.

"That's where I want to get to, instead of having to rely on scrambles," he told SI.com last summer. "That all looks cool, but I want to be able to have the answer even before the snap."

Combine increased awareness with Mahomes' scrambling ability and his arm strength? Well, that just might be the perfect quarterback.

Mike Garafolo is a reporter and host for NFL Network who has covered the NFL for various outlets since 2000. He lives in New Jersey with his wife, Jessica, and daughters Carmen and Vivian.

WALTER IOOSS JR./GETTY IMAGES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FAMILY HISTORY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT WERE KEYS TO RAIDERS OWNER **MARK DAVIS** BRINGING HIS TEAM TO THE SILVER STATE.

BY PAUL GUTIERREZ

Born in Brooklyn and raised in Oakland, Raiders owner Mark Davis has seemingly always had a little Las Vegas in his DNA. Yearly summer family trips to the desert mecca for his father Al Davis' birthday celebrations planted that seed.

The Rat Pack? A teen-aged and freckle-faced Davis was more of a lone wolf taking in Sin City of the late 1960s and early '70s.

"That's how I learned about Las Vegas as a kid, and I didn't golf or anything, so I'd just come down here and get sunburned," the younger Davis laughs. "We would come down on [Dad's] birthdays on July 4th, and we'd go see some of the shows. I remember seeing the comedians — Don Rickles. We saw Cher. My dad, he enjoyed it. He loved coming here and dining. And then sitting out in the sun during the day.

"And he would travel with his weights because they didn't have gyms at the hotels at the time. He'd work out during the day, and then he and my mom would go out and dine at night. And my dad was treated very nicely by the people. I didn't know why. It's just how it was."

The Desert Inn and the Riviera, two long-since-gone staples of old Vegas, were the Davis family's stomping grounds. Mark Davis, who took over control of the Raiders upon his Hall of Fame father's passing in 2011 and moved the franchise to Las Vegas in 2020, now represents new Vegas. And he wants to pay back that hospitality his family felt so many decades ago.

Spearheading the NFL's acceptance of Southern Nevada as a feasible market for the Raiders was one thing. Getting the league to push all its chips in and place Super Bowl LVIII at Allegiant Stadium, which sits just off the famed Las Vegas Strip on the aptly named corner of Al Davis Way and Dean Martin Drive (a "confluence" of the Raiders and Las Vegas history, the younger Davis likes to say), was the jackpot.

COURTESY OF LAS VEGAS RAIDERS

It was a gamble worth taking, says former Raiders quarterback Jim Plunkett, the MVP of Super Bowl XV who also has a lingering history with the family, organization, and city.

"The Davises have been involved with the Raiders for so long, and they made the team part of the community in Oakland, and they've made them a big part in Vegas," Plunkett says. "They've done a tremendous job in the things they've accomplished. The Raiders are an iconic figure in the NFL. It was a bold move on their part to bring the team to Vegas.

"My first trip to Vegas was in 1969. I was coming back from a USO tour visiting the troops in Japan, Guam, the Philippines, Okinawa, Taiwan — and Vegas was little, a couple of tiny buildings," recalls Plunkett, who would go on to win the Heisman Trophy at Stanford a year later. "And you look at it now and the way it's grown, it's got a lot of businesses other than the casino industry.

"A lot of families, lots of home development all around the city. It's really grown into a metropolitan area, and I think that means a lot to the league."

Pro sports leagues, once reluctant about franchises moving to Las Vegas, are now embracing it, having seen the enthusiasm of local fans and the eagerness of out-of-towners to travel there.

The NHL's Golden Knights arrived as an expansion franchise in 2017 and won the Stanley Cup last summer. The Aces, also owned by Davis, relocated from San Antonio in 2018, rebranded, and won back-to-back WNBA titles in 2022 and 2023. Major League Baseball's Oakland Athletics have filed relocation papers and plan on building a stadium on the Strip to open by 2028. And the NBA, which already plays its summer league on the University of Nevada-Las Vegas (UNLV) campus, has long been rumored to place a team here. UFC's headquarters are also in Las Vegas.

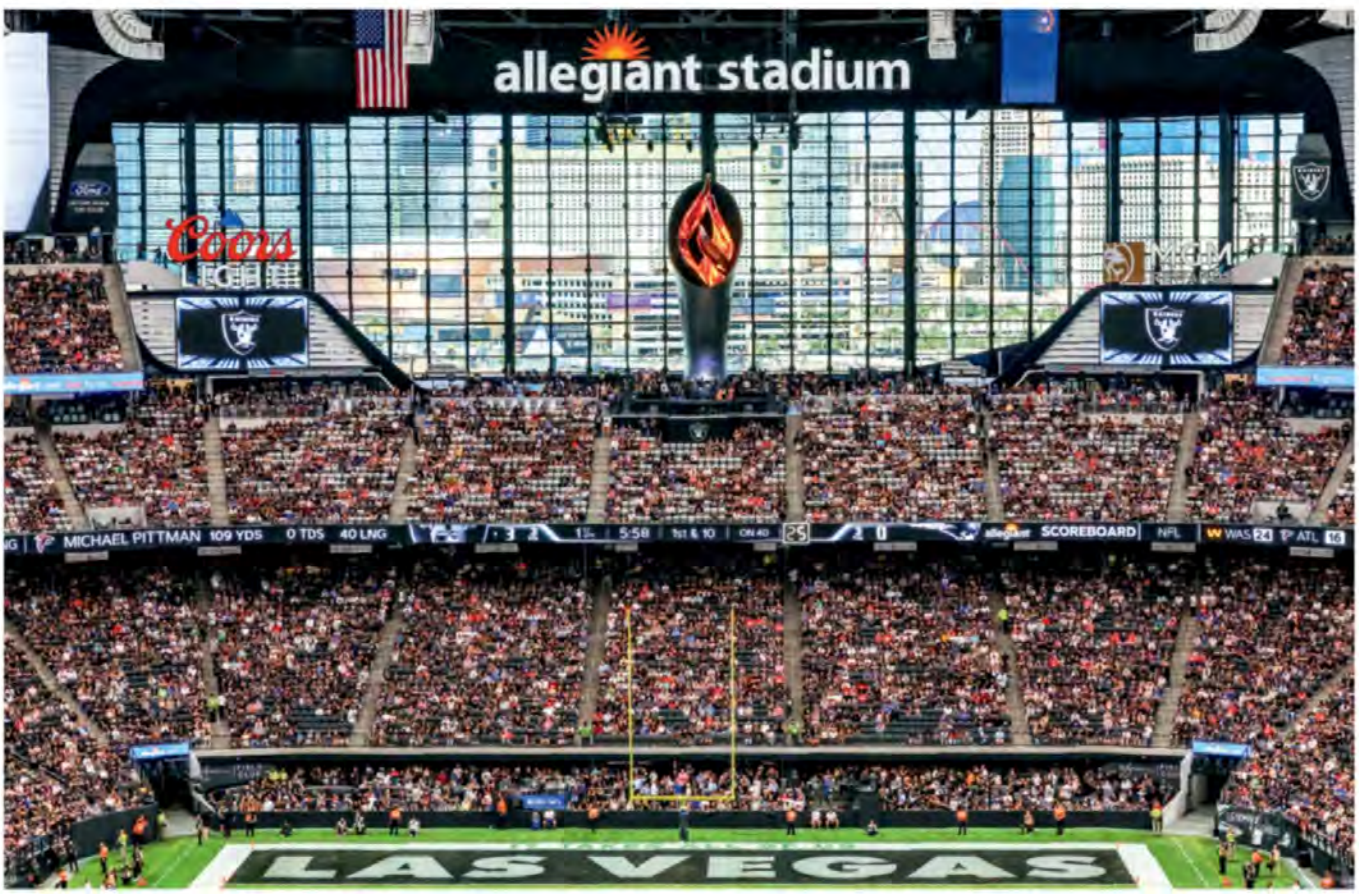
It wasn't that long ago when UNLV's Runnin' Rebels men's basketball team were the undisputed kings of the Las Vegas sports scene, with four Final Four appearances and a national championship in 1990 — all while battling the NCAA. Those days have passed as well. A men's basketball regional was held in the city last spring and the Final Four is coming in 2028. At Allegiant Stadium.

"It's interesting because sports in Las Vegas in the past was just UNLV when they were hot," Davis says. "Other than that, there really wasn't sports, other than boxing. It's a city that was told, 'No,' for so long, and, now, all of a sudden, they've got three franchises. The Golden Knights have done a phenomenal job of creating a culture in the city, a phenomenal job of being in the community and messaging the community.

"Then the Aces, with MGM bringing them here, that took a lot of courage, a lot of guts to do that. And, then, of course, the Raiders."

The pandemic halted the Raiders' initial momentum — no fans were allowed in the stadium the first year (2020) — but Davis smartly navigated that hiccup, too. He joined the fans in solidarity by staying away from home games.

"The reasoning was if the fans couldn't go, I wouldn't go," he says. "I would wait until they were able to go as



The Al Davis Memorial Torch is a prominent feature of Allegiant Stadium. It honors the longtime Raiders owner — and father of current owner Mark Davis — and his belief that "the fire that burns the brightest in the Raiders organization is the will to win."

ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

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"Since we came here and built this stadium, we've had the Pro Bowl, we've had the draft, we've been awarded a Super Bowl. I'm grateful that the league had enough faith and trust in us to put some of its most cherished assets on the line. To award us the Super Bowl is the crowning glory." — MARK DAVIS

The Raiders are known to have one of the most passionate fan bases in the NFL.

well. But one of the great moments was that first game played here with my mom being able to light the torch for my dad. That was one of the greatest moments in my life. To finally get the stadium that we had wanted for our whole existence — and to have her there for opening night to be able to do that — was really special."

Randall Cunningham, who played 16 seasons in the NFL after starring at UNLV in the early 1980s, says Davis and the Raiders should be commended for bringing pro football to Las Vegas.

"Back in the day, when I was playing in the league, people said there would *never* be an NFL team in Las Vegas," says Cunningham, who is the pastor for his Remnant Ministries church in Las Vegas and served as the Raiders' team chaplain upon their move to Southern Nevada. "Then to see that happen? Great decision. This is the entertainment capital of the world, and Vegas wants to have the best.

"During the '80s, when I got there, the biggest show in town was the UNLV Runnin' Rebels. Then came the Cirque shows and the entertainers: Celine Dion, Usher, Boyz II Men. It wasn't just people coming here to put money on tables. People travel here for entertainment."

And there's no bigger show than the Super Bowl.

"Oh my gosh, how about that?" Cunningham says. "It's just so amazing to me because the NFL saw what happened when they had the draft here. That was super nuts because it was superbly done by the casinos and the location and where people were at. It was spectacular."

The Raiders landing in Las Vegas was a multi-year odyssey unto itself. Having failed to secure a new stadium deal in their ancestral home of Oakland, the Raiders finished third in what Davis called "a three-horse race" to return to Los Angeles in 2015 (where the team called home from 1982 through 1994).

After the Rams won the right to relocate from St. Louis, and the Chargers joined them from San Diego, Davis' attention switched to the desert sand and neon lights. That's because former Raiders running back Napoleon McCallum, who was working in the Las Vegas Sands Corp.'s community development department, had been in Davis' ear about the potential of Las Vegas as a new home.

"Move to Vegas, my boss will help build a stadium," McCallum told Davis.

"Listen, I don't want to get anybody started on anything on that path, not until Oakland and L.A. are extinguished, exhausted," Davis replied. "If, in fact, that happens, I'll come down and meet your boss."

After Davis lost out on Los Angeles — and saw the team's rent tripled in Oakland — he had McCallum set up the sit down.

Mark Davis, meet Sheldon Adelson. Sheldon Adelson, meet Mark Davis.

"I told the people down here, Governor (Brian) Sandoval, Sheldon, everybody from the Sands, 'If, in fact, you all can come together and come through with what we're talking about, I will do everything in my power to move to Las Vegas,'" Davis recalls. "I said, 'If you come through with what we're talking about, we'll be giving the NFL an offer they can't refuse.'"

The younger Davis, though, had to win hearts and minds in Nevada, referring to the Silver State as the "Silver and Black State" numerous times. He credits former team president Marc Badain with getting the eventual $2 billion, 65,000-seat domed stadium — with its sliding tray of natural grass for a playing field, a translucent roof, sliding lanai doors on the north end,

COURTESY OF LAS VEGAS RAIDERS (Mark Davis); DAVID BECKER/AP IMAGES

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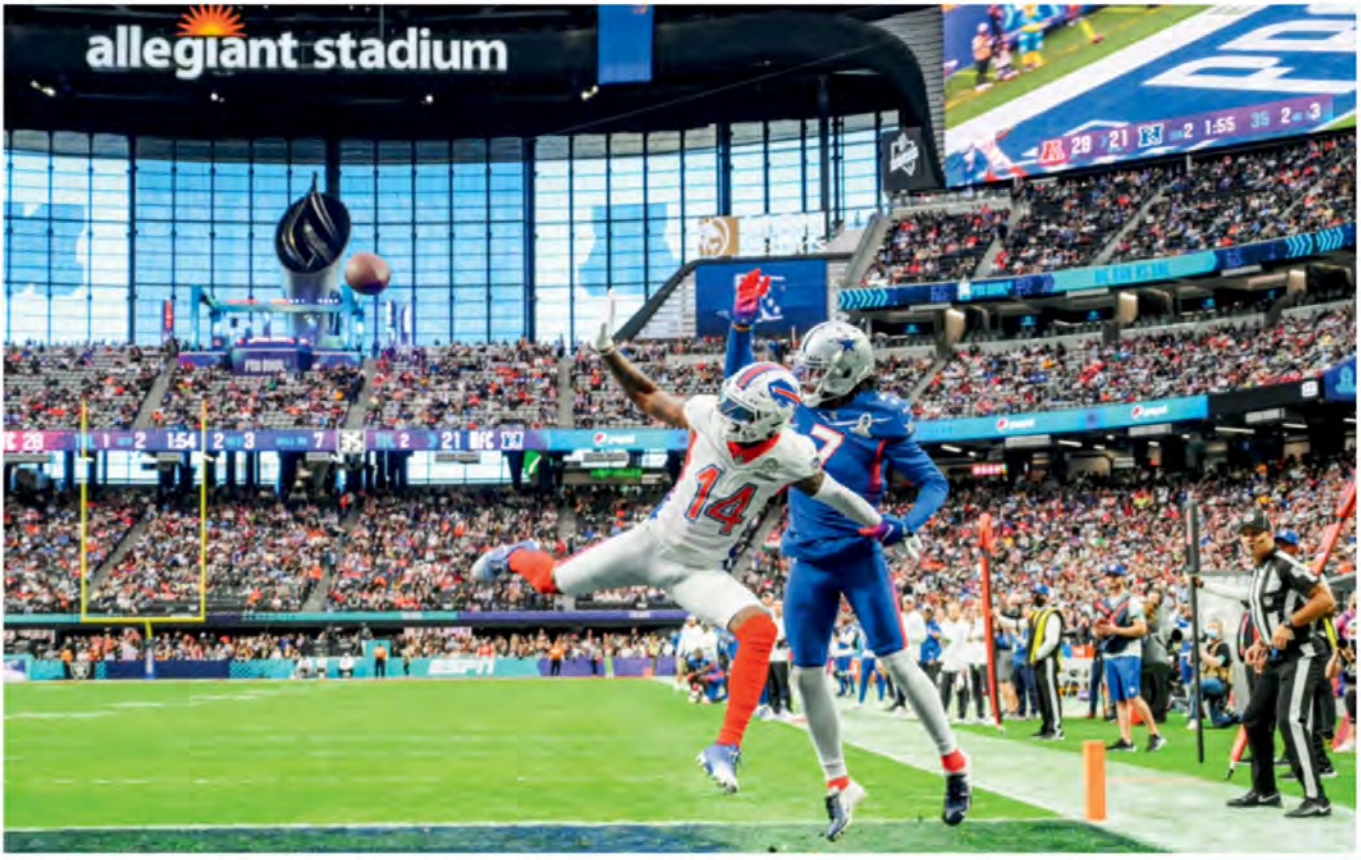

and a jaw-dropping view of the Strip behind the 95-foot-tall Al Davis Torch inspired by the peristyle end of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum — completed.

"It's one thing to be at the top level and making the deal and having the vision, but people down in the bowels making the sausage? That's tough work, man," Davis says.

And after winning the NFL vote to relocate by a 31-1 margin in 2017, the move was done with not only the present in mind, but the future. As in eventually playing host to the league's crown jewel: the Super Bowl.

"Since we came here and built this stadium, we've had the Pro Bowl, we've had the draft, we've been awarded a Super Bowl," Davis says. "I'm grateful that the league had enough faith and trust in us to put some of its most cherished assets on the line. To award us the Super Bowl is the crowning glory."

In fact, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said Davis was asking about hosting early in the process.

"I don't think he had even gotten into town yet and he was talking about it," Goodell says. "But I think all of our owners ... understood we were going to be playing a lot of our big events here. The Super Bowl included, right from Day 1."

Is Davis surprised?

"No, and I'll tell you why," he says. "I think the NFL is surprised more than we are because of how great we delivered on the stadium. It's not a rinky-dink stadium; it's one of the nicest in the world. They saw our facility during the Pro Bowl because the teams used it. They saw what we built. I think they're in shock, really, of how great of a product we delivered.

The Super Bowl is the latest marquee event the NFL has brought to Las Vegas, joining the Pro Bowl (above) — which took place at Allegiant Stadium in 2022 and 2023 — and the 2022 NFL Draft (right).

"And with Las Vegas, which I believe is the best hospitality city, maybe, in the world — it's got the rooms, it's got the dining, it's got the entertainment, it's got the sports, and now we have the facility. Once the Super Bowl is over and they see, again, how Las Vegas delivers, I think it's going to be a long-term marriage between the NFL and Las Vegas."

It's in the DNA.

Paul Gutierrez covers the Raiders for ESPN.com and has written two books on the Raiders. He is a UNLV and Barstow (Calif.) Community College graduate who covered his first Raiders game in 1988.

DAVID BECKER/AP IMAGES (Pro Bowl); JEFF LEWIS/AP IMAGES (NFL Draft)

Larry Csonka (39) carried the Dolphins to victory in Super Bowl VIII, rushing for 145 yards and two touchdowns.

FOCUS ON SPORT/GETTY IMAGES

NEAR-PERFECT ENCORE

ALTHOUGH THE '73 DOLPHINS LOST TWICE ON THEIR WAY TO THE SUPER BOWL, THEY MAY HAVE BEEN BETTER THAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S UNDEFEATED TEAM.

BY ALEX MARVEZ

They weren't perfect.
But were they better?
It's a fair question to ask about the 1973 Miami Dolphins.

The 50-year remembrance of that Super Bowl VIII-winning team wasn't nearly as celebrated this past year compared to golden anniversary festivities for the 1972 Dolphins — and understandably so. After all, the latter remains the only team in NFL history to complete a perfect season.

The 1973 Dolphins fell short on that front with two losses in their 14-game regular-season schedule. However, there were areas where the '73 team shone brighter.

One of them was postseason excellence. Playoff wins over Cincinnati and Oakland were by 18 and 17 points, respectively. That same dominance was on display in Super Bowl VIII against Minnesota, a 24-7 rout in which Bob Griese need only attempt seven passes (coming off just six throws versus the Raiders).

Griese — the quarterback for both Dolphins championship teams — won't argue that the '72 squad was superior solely because of its unblemished record.

"We were as good or better than the '72 team," he says of the 1973 Dolphins. "Everything had to go right for us in 1972 to not lose a game. In '73, we could have gone undefeated as well.

The Dolphins (with coach Don Shula pictured) and the Vikings wait before taking the field at Rice Stadium for Super Bowl VIII. Shula's Dolphins would prevail, 24-7, to capture their second consecutive Super Bowl title.

"But you can't win them all. Everybody has to lose some. That happened for the first 52 years of the NFL and ever since, except for one year."

If anyone thinks the Dolphins entered the 1973 season still basking in the glow of 17-0, they didn't know Don Shula. Miami's head coach was as demanding, if not more so, than the previous training camp when the team was coming off a humbling Super Bowl VI loss to Dallas.

"It was tense," Dolphins fullback Larry Csonka says. "Shula had his foot in your butt constantly, even in the early days of camp and exhibition games.

"He was afraid we were going to lose our edge. He wanted us to go one game at a time and treat every game like a Super Bowl. We did that in '72. We started '73 with the same intensity."

The season opened in the same winning fashion with a 21-13 triumph over San Francisco. But thoughts of another perfect season were dashed the following week.

Miami's vaunted rushing attack was kept in check while the Raiders produced 187 yards on 46 time-consuming carries. The Dolphins' passing game didn't pick up the slack, and there was uncharacteristic sloppiness with two more turnovers — following four against the 49ers. And while the Raiders were limited to four George Blanda field goals, Miami's winning streak was snapped at 18 games in a 12-7 loss.

"That game was a dog-eat-dog type of contest," Dolphins defensive end Vern Den Herder recalls. "It was a disappointment that we lost.

"But just like the year before, our focus was not on going undefeated. Our focus was on getting to the Super Bowl and winning it."

Csonka said the Raiders loss caused the team to refocus on that long-term goal.

"We kind of took a deep breath and said, 'We've got to get back to being serious game to game and make sure we get to the playoffs,'" he says.

The Dolphins wasted no time getting back on track the following week, riding a 301-yard rushing performance to a 44-23 home win over New England. Coordinator Bill Arnsparger's heralded No-Name Defense soon raised its level, too. Miami posted back-to-back shutouts over the Baltimore Colts and Buffalo and didn't allow more than 14 points while winning its next eight games.

Even when that unit sprung a leak against Pittsburgh's running game in a rematch of the 1972 AFC Championship Game, Miami compensated with six interceptions — including two by safety Dick Anderson that he returned for touchdowns— to spark a 30-26 home win in Week 12.

Miami would finish with the league's top-ranked scoring defense, allowing only 10.7 points per game, even stingier than the 12.2 ppg allowed during its perfect season.

"Of utmost importance is that our defense played

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Miami's defense, led by linebacker Nick Buoniconti (85), was every bit as dominant in 1973 as it was during the team's undefeated '72 campaign. The Dolphins allowed a league-low 10.7 ppg.

with teamwork," says Den Herder, who spent his entire NFL career (1971–82) with Miami. "We knew we had to take care of our own job first. If we had that covered, we could go hunting for the football."

Csonka said being the hunted was commonplace for the Dolphins as opponents used Miami's Super Bowl VII season as motivation. And it was lowly Baltimore, of all teams, that actually caught its prey. But that 16–3 setback to what was a 2–10 Colts squad may have been the best thing to happen for Miami's championship hopes.

"Shula knew we were close to the end of the regular season, and it was obvious we were going to be in the playoffs," Csonka explains. "He started Earl (Morrall) at quarterback and wanted to give the starters some rest because the game made no difference.

"We'd had such a target on our back all season, he wanted us to have a little bit of a breather and relax a little bit."

Of course, Shula wouldn't let the Dolphins rest for long. Den Herder said that's where experience from the 1972 Super Bowl run came in handy on a roster that had returned largely intact and included future Hall of Famers Griese, Csonka, center Jim Langer, guard Larry Little, wide receiver Paul Warfield, and linebacker Nick Buoniconti.

"We were business-like," Den Herder says. "We knew what our job was and went out and did it."

Adds Csonka: "Coach Shula said, 'Here's the deal. We're going back to the way we practiced in training camp.' It was like we fed off that Baltimore loss to justify the high-intensity shift heading into the playoffs."

Shula's approach paid immediate dividends as the Dolphins closed the regular season with a 34–7 rout of Detroit. In its 34–16 AFC Divisional Playoff win over Cincinnati, Miami's 400 yards of offense nearly doubled the Bengals' output. And the subsequent rematch against Oakland in the AFC Championship Game featured a much better rushing effort than in Week 2, with Csonka's 117-yard, three-touchdown performance pacing a 27–10 victory.

Those kinds of routs didn't happen in Miami's 1972 postseason run, which Csonka chronicles in his 2022 memoir, *Head On*.

"The shining feature demonstrated in Super Bowl VII was that our defense was the reason we were undefeated more so than the offense," said Csonka, referencing Miami's 14–7 win over Washington. "It was a lopsided situation.

"In '73, the offense — the line in particular — was the needed ingredient. We got hold of the ball and didn't give it back. We could really control the game."

The Dolphins did just that in Super Bowl VIII against Minnesota, jumping to a 14–0 first-quarter lead and never being seriously challenged. Csonka barreled his way to MVP honors with a 145-yard, two-TD performance while handling the ball on 33 of Miami's 53 carries.

Even as he received acclaim for being the first running back given that accolade, Csonka said one of his teammates — left guard Bob Kuechenberg — provided the key to Miami's offensive success and exemplified what set the Dolphins apart.

"Kuech had noticed and told our coaches that (Vikings defensive tackle) Alan Page had a tick where he would put his hand when he was going to go a certain way," Csonka recalls. "Kuech would call red or green and that told Griese where Page was going. We went where he wasn't, and it paid off.

"That's the ringing truth about the '72 and '73 teams, why one went undefeated and the other came back and repeated as champions. It's what Shula called the winning edge. It's not strength or bravery but intelligence. We could attack the weakest point of an opponent by knowing what their tendencies were."

So which Dolphins team was better: 1972 or 1973? To Den Herder, the answer still isn't clear-cut a half-century later.

"Everybody knew we were for real in '73," he says. "We weren't given that kind of respect [a year earlier]. There were some close games that could have gone either way. In '73, we didn't have as many of those, even though we played teams that knew what we were. We came out most of the time triumphant and won a Super Bowl again despite having the odds stacked up."

That's the main point to Csonka as well.

"In '72, the Super Bowl went right down to the wire," he says. "We were just so glad we won, we didn't even think about the undefeated season. The Minnesota victory was a much, much more enjoyable experience. We never had a point in the playoffs or the Super Bowl in 1973 where we were catching our breath and living second to second.

"We performed perfectly."

Alex Marvez is a SiriusXM NFL Radio host who has covered the NFL in various capacities for 29 seasons.

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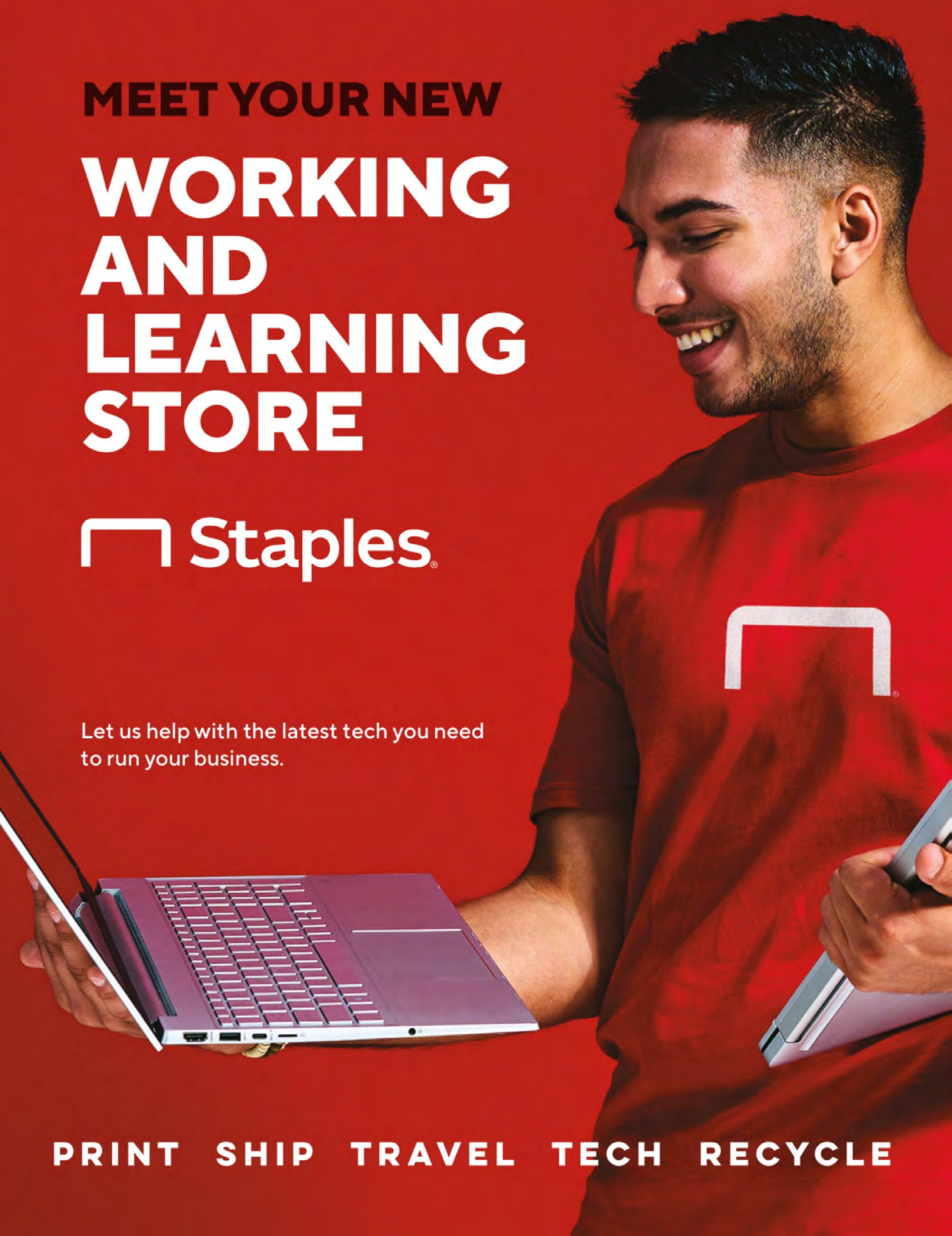

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FRONT & CENTER

From locker room leadership to making critical calls at the line of scrimmage, a top-flight center is essential to a team's Super Bowl hopes.

BY JOHN KRYK

EVEN CASUAL NFL FANS know who the centers of attention are during Super Bowl week. It's the head coaches, quarterbacks, star receivers, ace defenders, and, maybe, a prolific rusher. That's about it.

But the starting centers? Almost never.

And that's a shame.

"The center is just as instrumental as the quarterback in getting an offense into the right play call and blocking a play properly," says former NFL head coach Tony Dungy, who guided the Indianapolis Colts to victory in Super Bowl XLI.

An offensive play has little chance to succeed unless properly blocked by those 300-plus-pound behemoths across the offensive line. And, ultimately, it's the center's job to get that unit's blocking assignments corrected and communicated, based on the play about to be run and how the defensive front is deployed.

"Second to the quarterback, the center is the guy with the most responsibility," says Bill Cowher, head coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers from 1992 to 2006 and whose tenure included a win in Super Bowl XL. "You can talk about all the other positions, but the quarterback and the center are the two guys on every snap who touch the ball. And the center is the guy up front who regulates, directs, and guides that whole offensive line."

The center's role became more integral in the 1940s with the advent of the direct snap. Instead of shot-gunning the ball backward while looking upside down between his legs, the center now could just

One of the league's top centers over the past decade, the Eagles' Jason Kelce (62) is a perennial All-Pro who has played in two Super Bowls.

ABOVE: Bart Oates (65) started at center in the Giants' first two Super Bowl victories, one with Phil Simms (XXI) at quarterback and the other with Jeff Hostetler (XXV). TOP RIGHT: Jim Langer prepares to snap the ball to QB Bob Griese. The tandem keyed the Dolphins' offense in their Super Bowl VII and VIII wins.

windmill it off the ground between his legs with one hand — and without looking — directly into the awaiting, cupped hands of the quarterback. He thus joined the guards and tackles flanking him in being able to keep his head up and faced forward, with the ability to block a defender the instant the ball was put in play.

It changed football. It also initiated a parade of centers whose skills brought their teams success while ultimately earning them a bust in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, starting with the Chicago Bears' Bulldog Turner in the 1940s and continuing through the decades with Frank Gatski, Chuck Bednarik, Jim Ringo, Jim Otto, Mick Tingelhoff, Jim Langer, Mike Webster, Dwight Stephenson, Dermontti Dawson, and Kevin Mawae.

Over the years, centers gradually have had more scoops of vital responsibilities plunked onto their plates. On those legendary Packers teams of the 1960s, it was the responsibility of Ringo — just before the snap — to merely toggle the O-line's blocking, based on whether the defense lined up in an odd- or even-man front.

"[Jim] was calling out to us the blocking — the odd or the even," explains guard Jerry Kramer, who starred on Green Bay's Super Bowl I and II champions. "The blocking was set either way. It didn't change. If Jim was uncertain, he would call odd."

In the early 1970s, the Miami Dolphins played in three consecutive Super Bowls — VI, VII, and VIII — winning the last two. Langer, who didn't miss a start during that span, was flanked through much of the decade by a pair of standout guards: Larry Little on his right and Bob Kuechenberg on his left. Little says those Dolphins teams fooled opposing defenses into believing they were doing a lot of last-second adjusting at the line, based on looks those defenses presented. But no.

"We did not ever change the blocking assignments," says Little, a five-time First-Team All-Pro. "But on any play, we could have snap-count calls. The only reason we did that was in case someone forgot the snap count. It would be a color or a letter. (Color-wise) if the count was on 1, it would be 'red.' If it was on 2, it would be 'white.' And if it was on 3, it would be 'blue.' But we had a lot of dummy calls that Jim would call out, too. They had no significance as to how we were going to block the play."

By the time the 1980s arrived, the NFL was morphing into a pass-first league, thanks in no small part to Bill Walsh's West Coast Offense, which ultimately produced five Super Bowl championships for the San Francisco 49ers. A center's responsibilities thus increased, too, as aerial attacks proliferated.

One of the league's all-time great left tackles, Anthony Muñoz, played in two Super Bowls that decade with the Cincinnati Bengals (losing both times to Walsh's 49ers) and recalls how offensive line play changed considerably during his career.

"It definitely got a lot more complex for me," Muñoz says. "In my rookie season, we had Kenny Anderson at quarterback. He called the play in the huddle, and we had one terminology per play. You could call a blocking audible, a 'check-with-me' at the line, but it wasn't that complex.

"But fast-forward to my fifth year, with (head coach) Sam Wyche and (quarterback) Boomer Esiason. We would have terminology to call one play four or five different ways. Each variation was coded with different terms. We had dummy calls, too. By then, everybody did. We, as an offensive line, had to step it up several notches."

Muñoz says his line coach in Cincinnati refused to put all the pre-snap burden on the center.

"I think a misconception is we tackles and guards don't know anything until the center relays it. Jim McNally [taught] us all that when you come up to the line of scrimmage, don't only look at the

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Former Colts center Jeff Saturday (63) calls out blocking assignments to the offensive line, a vital part of a center's job given the modern game's complex schemes.

guy you're blocking; you should also be able to identify the same things the center is. So, most of the time when we came to the line, we, too, diagnosed where the 'Mike' (middle linebacker) was and what the center was then going to call."

What might a center's O-line blocking-call changes involve? Don't over-complicate it, says Bart Oates, center on the New York Giants teams that captured Super Bowls XXI and XXV.

"Offensive line play is all about angles," Oates says. "The overall concept is exceptionally simple: It's just creating the best angles for your blockers. If somebody moves into a gap, that angle changes. Sometimes when you saw mismatches, the center couldn't bark out the changes in time before he had to snap it. Or maybe he didn't have time to recognize it, or he just didn't see it. Then it's a broken play."

A center's barked-out blocking adjustments typically are just one word. Maybe two.

"Everything is short — very, very short — because of time," Oates says. "We had some like 'Roger,' 'Louie.' ... Most O-line calls were one word. And, also, we're dealing with guards and tackles, so they're a little bit slower (laughs). But, seriously, calls have to be very simple, very quick."

Cowher says the demands on centers have only increased, especially in today's game. The center sometimes even helps the quarterback, pre-snap at the line.

"It's the cat-and-mouse that takes place between offense and defense, as far as what you want to show and the illusion to conceal what the play actually is going to be," Cowher explains. "There are more offensive line blocking audibles now than ever — between run and pass, between run and run, and different protections that you need based on the fronts you're seeing.

"That communication comes sometimes directly from the quarterback, but also sometimes now from the center *to* the quarterback, and the quarterback then calls out the protection. Particularly for young quarterbacks in this league, it's important to have a veteran, in-control center who can alleviate some of that pressure."

Is that something that might have aided Philadelphia — with longtime center Jason Kelce and breakout star quarterback Jalen Hurts — during last year's Super Bowl run?

"There's no question," Cowher says. "There's a calmness a quarterback gains, especially a young one, when he knows the center in front of him is in control of everything that you're doing."

So much is going on at the line of scrimmage in the final 8-10 seconds prior to every snap, Cowher says, that it amounts to the "ultimate chess match" in sports.

"Everyone is trying to create a little bit of hesitation, and a little bit of confusion or uncertainty."

Who must be wise to all of it? No one more than the center.

Dungy, a starting quarterback at the University of Minnesota and a defensive back on two Steelers Super Bowl teams in the late '70s, has witnessed it from many different perspectives.

"Mike Webster called a lot of things for our offense on the Steelers, changing the blocking schemes depending on what the front was," Dungy says. "But, yes, now the center must know if he has one, two, or no backs in the backfield to help out with protection. Or what the front is. Or who all the linebackers are, not just the 'Mike.'

"Normally, there are three linebackers you can identify, but now with all these nickel and dime defenses, you've got to treat some of these defensive backs as linebackers. And the center is still responsible for having somebody block them. And shading the line left or right — that type of thing. For sure, there is more involved. And for sure, it is very, very critical."

Dungy remembers that in Super Bowl XLI, his center, Jeff Saturday, was studying the supplied overhead in-game photographs as much as quarterback Peyton Manning. That was necessary because Saturday knew Manning loved to change the play at the line, with seconds left on the play clock. Dungy provides an example.

"If your quarterback sees 1-on-1 coverage on the outside, and he all of a sudden audibles to a pass play, well that's great," Dungy says. "He's telling the receivers what to do, and what assignments to run. But those offensive linemen now have to think, 'How are we going to block that pass he just called? And we've got three seconds left on the play clock to figure it out.' The center's got to do that."

And if he fails at it too often, well, he can become a center of attention for the wrong reasons. Especially in a Super Bowl.

John Kryk has written award-winning stories and books on football history for more than 30 years. He is a Canadian National Newspaper Award winner for Sports who has covered the NFL since 2012.

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THE BEST OF BRADY

A sixth-round draft pick who became a seven-time Super Bowl champion, **Tom Brady** defied expectations and defined greatness.

BY CHAREAN WILLIAMS

ADAM HUNGER/AP IMAGES; RICH VON BIBERSTEIN/GETTY IMAGES

Tom Brady raises his arms in triumph as the final seconds count off the clock in Tampa Bay's 31-9 victory over the Chiefs in Super Bowl LV. It marked the quarterback's seventh Super Bowl win.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers general manager Jason Licht has a framed photo signed by Tom Brady on the wall in his home office. He sees it every day and cherishes the memory. Licht was having a quiet moment before Super Bowl LV, sitting alone on the team's bench, staring at the ground, when he looked up to find his quarterback standing in front of him.

"I was reflecting on the year and thinking about my dad, who had passed away, and how much he would have enjoyed this," Licht says. "All of sudden, Tom is standing right in front of me, and he goes, 'This is going to be a great day,' and then he walked off. I got chills. I was like, 'Oh, my God, he knows something we don't.' He just felt it. He knew it. "Someone snapped a picture of that exact moment, which was just a moment, and I'll always have that."

Brady delivered six such memories to the New England Patriots in his 20 years there before going to Tampa, where he won his seventh Super Bowl title. After three seasons with the Buccaneers — and 23 NFL seasons in all — Brady retired.

So, does he miss the game more than the game misses him?

"The game is in great hands," he says. "It's time for other guys to do it."

The Patriots missed Brady when he left New England after the 2019 season. The Buccaneers and the NFL missed Brady when he retired after the 2022 season. The other teams in the NFL? They were happy to see him go.

The 2023 season marked the first in more than two decades that a team quarterbacked by Brady wasn't among the favorites to win the Super Bowl. Instead, Brady spent the fall watching the game as a football fan instead of a football player.

"It's weird without him," admits former teammate Rodney Harrison, now an analyst for NBC's *Sunday Night Football* pregame show, *Football Night in America*. "But at the end of the day, the league goes on."

But as former Buccaneers head coach Bruce Arians says, "It was the same for Peyton (Manning) when he finally hung it up. The game isn't the same without those guys."

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Brady owns nearly every career mark for a quarterback, including regular-season wins (251), pass attempts (12,050), completions (7,753), passing yards (89,214), and touchdown passes (649). He also has more Pro Bowls (15), more playoff games played (48), more Super Bowl rings (7), and more Super Bowl MVP awards (5) than any other player in NFL history.

Despite all the achievements and accolades, Brady eschews the "GOAT" nickname.

"He never, ever wants to be addressed as the GOAT," Brady's father, Thomas Brady Sr., says. "That's a very sensitive subject to him. It's just not the way he looks at himself. He looks at himself as the 199th draft pick.

"His mom one time said, 'Wow, you're the GOAT.' He said in a rather stern way — as stern as he can be with his mom — 'Mom, please don't ever, ever say that.' That's just something somebody else might say. He just thinks of himself as a very diligent, hard-working, good teammate."

Brady didn't begin playing football seriously until his freshman year at an all-boys Catholic school in San Mateo, Calif. He was the backup quarterback for an 0-8 freshman team that did not score an offensive touchdown, and while Brady saw playing time as a receiver and tight end, he never got a chance behind center. Undeterred, he worked his way into the starting role at QB for the junior varsity as a sophomore, and one year later took over that same position for the varsity.

Football "captured" Brady, according to his father. The teenager quit basketball and, later, baseball — the Montreal Expos selected him in the 18th round of the 1995 Major League Baseball Draft — to concentrate on the gridiron. After throwing for 3,702 yards and 31 touchdowns in high school, Brady chose the University of Michigan. He arrived in Ann Arbor seventh on the depth chart, and following a redshirt season, moved up to third string.

Brady threw only 20 passes in his first three collegiate seasons, his first attempt resulting in a pick-six, but in 1998, his first as a starter, he set school records for most attempts and most completions in a season. Yet even that didn't win him the starting job as a senior, with head coach Lloyd Carr initially deciding Brady and Drew Henson would share signal-caller duties. Brady finally took over the full-time starting role following a near-comeback win over Michigan State midway through the season.

"He always had success when given the opportunity, and his success never surprised me," Henson says, "because I sat next to him every day and watched him work and saw him prepare and knew his football intelligence and his work ethic. He carried all of that with him into the NFL."

The photo of Brady wearing nothing but a pair of shorts at the 2000 NFL Scouting Combine remains famous in football annals. It also fueled his success. Though he stood nearly 6-foot-5, Brady weighed only 211 pounds and ran a turtle-like 5.28 seconds in the 40-yard dash. In other words, Brady did absolutely nothing to change scouts' opinion that he would never become an NFL starter. What teams couldn't measure, however, were his intangibles: his love of football, his work ethic, his insatiable appetite to be coached, his competitiveness, and his leadership.

"I don't want to say it's robotic, but it's almost like he's a robot," says Miami Dolphins receivers coach Wes Welker, who caught passes from Brady for six seasons in New England. "It's just all ball with him. The amount of commitment he has, there's never that, 'Ah, I've made it.'

"He never goes to that place. He just does what he does — over and over again — and doesn't deviate from the plan. That amount of focus and drive of never taking your foot off the pedal is really what separates him."

But no one in the NFL knew that in 2000, when six quarterbacks were drafted before Brady, who had expected to be taken in the second or third round. The Patriots graded Brady higher than they selected him after a positive assessment from then-quarterbacks coach Dick Rehbein, but the team was $10.5 million over the salary cap at the beginning of the 2000 league year and had only 42 players under contract. With Drew Bledsoe, John Friesz, and Michael Bishop already on the roster, quarterback was one position where the team didn't have a need.

Still, those in the Patriots' draft room began talking about Brady during the fourth round. His name also came up in the fifth round and again early in the sixth round when defensive back Antwan Harris was the choice. Finally, at No. 199 overall, they turned in Brady's name.

"This was the combination of good fortune: the perfect storm of player development and the right player being developed," says Scott Pioli, the Patriots' assistant director

Brady played with poise beyond his years in the Patriots' win over the Rams in Super Bowl XXXVI. In only his second NFL season, he led a last-minute drive that set up Adam Vinatieri's 48-yard field goal for the 20-17 victory.

BOB ROSATO/GETTY IMAGES

of player personnel in 2000. "But I will also say this. We were in a league at the time where more than half the teams kept only two quarterbacks on their 53-man roster and a third on a practice squad. We kept four on our active roster. So, we thought we liked something, and saying it was just dumb luck would be disrespectful."

Patriots owner Robert Kraft loves telling the story of meeting Brady for the first time.

Kraft still can see "a skinny beanpole" coming down the Foxboro Stadium steps with a pizza box under his arm. Brady began to introduce himself, and Kraft interrupted, saying he already knew who Brady was.

"He looked me straight in my eyes and said, 'I'm the best decision this organization has ever made,'" Kraft recalls. "He said it in a way that was matter of fact, and you know what? He was right."

Brady changed the face of the Patriots. They were 7-10 in the postseason with no Super Bowl titles and two AFC championships before Brady's arrival. With him, they went 35-13 in the postseason, hoisted six Lombardi Trophies, and won nine AFC titles.

"A lot of people say they want to win, and they'll do anything that's required of them to do so and commit to working as hard and being as perfect on a consistent basis as they need to be," says veteran NFL coach Josh McDaniels, who was with the Patriots for most of Brady's career, including 11 seasons as offensive coordinator. "But there's only a couple of people in our sport who have ever actually done it. He's one of them.

"Any little thing that wasn't right wasn't good enough for him. He had such a desire and a demand of himself to be great in everything. Then, he also asked that of his teammates," McDaniels notes. "A lot of people are afraid to go to that place, because then what you do is you set this bar so high for yourself on a daily basis that it wears you out. He had such an incredible competitive stamina that it never wore him out."

Bill Belichick called Brady a "tone-setter" and a "bar-raiser," and the QB had a work ethic that endeared him to the former Patriots head coach. Early in his career, Brady somehow finagled a key to the Patriots' old facility, and none of the team's brain trust knew until a security guard called to ask if he was *supposed* to have a key.

Then, there was the time in the spring of 2001 when Pioli saw the lights on in the team's practice bubble late on a Friday night. He went into the building to find Brady working out by himself, doing footwork drills and throwing the ball into the net. Pioli told Brady to lock up when he was finished, and Brady responded with one request of Pioli: "Please don't tell anyone you saw me here tonight."

Brady left New England and headed to Tampa as a free agent in 2020, breaking Kraft's heart and the hearts of Patriots Nation. Everyone in New England had hoped Brady would finish his career where he started it with at least one more Super Bowl ring.

Brady did indeed get another ring but not with the Patriots.

"He had been with us 20 years, and I wanted him to know in the end what he did for us," Kraft says. "He played for less money than his value, and he did it because he knew we would use the money on other players to support him. At some point, I thought he deserved to have his freedom if that's what he wanted.

"After 20 years, there were a lot of reasons he felt it was best to move on, and I understood it. It made me sad, but because of what he did, I thought he was entitled to that. What he did down in Tampa was extraordinary."

Brady won a Super Bowl in his first season with an organization that hadn't even won a playoff game since its last Super Bowl in 2002. The Buccaneers reached the playoffs all three years Brady was there.

As he did in New England, Brady changed the face of the franchise in Tampa.

Brady won without Belichick, with a team other than the Patriots, separating himself and further cementing his legacy as the greatest of all time. The only question left is: Will Patrick Mahomes, or anyone else, ever top Brady?

"It's going to be hard for somebody to do what Tom did," McDaniels says. "Can somebody do it? Maybe. Obviously, Tom set an incredible standard and bar, and nobody's ever done what he's done. It'll be interesting to see if anybody can even get close."

Brady raises the Lombardi Trophy following the Patriots' win over the Falcons in Super Bowl LI. The QB orchestrated the biggest comeback in Super Bowl history, rallying his team from a 25-point deficit.

DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP IMAGES

Charean Williams, who works for NBC Sports/Pro Football Talk, has covered the NFL for 30 years. She has been a Pro Football Hall of Fame selector since 2007.

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WEEK OF YORE

WHILE THE GAME REMAINS THE MAIN ATTRACTION, A GROWING LIST OF EVENTS HAS BROADENED FANS' CONNECTION TO THE SUPER BOWL.

BY JUDY BATTISTA

WALTER IOOSS JR./GETTY IMAGES

The most iconic moment leading up to a Super Bowl — any of the first 57 Super Bowls — took place in 1969 at a Fort Lauderdale hotel pool, the shaggy-haired quarterback of the New York Jets lounging in his checkered swim trunks.

With a few reporters having slipped out to join Joe Namath in the sun for an unorthodox press conference, he signed an autograph for a pretty girl, talked about his favorite brand of Scotch, and smiled the megawatt smile that made "Broadway Joe" a superstar. Namath had already been fined $50 by Commissioner Pete Rozelle for missing a picture session, one of the rudimentary bits of promotion the NFL — and its PR-attuned commissioner — required of teams in the Super Bowl's earliest years.

"They've got 10,000 pictures of us," Namath ruminated to the reporters gathered around him. "Why do they need more than that?"

They would need so many more than that in the years to come. Namath's interview and, later that week, his guarantee of victory over the heavily favored Baltimore Colts galvanized interest and excitement leading up to Super Bowl III.

Namath's poolside session, though, was just a precursor to what is now a week-long carnival of press conferences, concerts, celebrity appearances, awards ceremonies, and exhibits that take over the host city in the lead-up to gameday. Super Bowl Sunday has morphed into Super Bowl Week.

"The thinking is at least two-fold — creating that week-long celebration that elevates and makes the Super Bowl that much bigger for everybody," says

With the Super Bowl's enormous growth, poolside interviews — like the one given by Joe Namath prior to Super Bowl III — have been replaced by *Super Bowl Opening Night*, a nationally televised event attended by thousands of fans and media.

Peter O'Reilly, the NFL's executive vice president, club business, international and league events. "And the core of a lot of these events — the Super Bowl Experience, Super Bowl Opening Night — is allowing the broadest set of fans within the region to experience the Super Bowl even if they are not, this year, one of the nearly 70,000 in Allegiant Stadium. That's the focus of these accessible events, to be part of that memory of, 'The Super Bowl was in my market.'"

No single event has tracked the evolution and explosion of the week's calendar more than what used to quaintly be called "photo day." Players would wear their jerseys and a few reporters and photographers would show up at the teams' practice facilities. For Super Bowl I, Rozelle had to twist arms just to convince head coach Vince Lombardi to bring the Green Bay Packers to Los Angeles early in the week. The dozen reporters who went to the team's Santa Barbara hotel were told to go knock on Bart Starr's door if they needed him.

Super Bowl XX was held in New Orleans, where the fear of bad weather prompted the NFL to move photo day to the indoor Louisiana Superdome, marking the first time it took place at the game site. It might have been the best thing the NFL ever did because it forced them to have the stadium ready, believes Jim Steeg, who for 26 years ran the NFL's special events department and is widely credited with making the Super Bowl arguably the biggest one-day sporting event in the world.

Still, Media Day back then was largely a glorified press conference. But once MTV's Downtown Julie Brown showed up in Tampa Bay in 1991, and the questions veered away from X's and O's, Media Day became a crossover sensation, with thousands of reporters clamoring for zany quotes and the day a highlight of the pop culture calendar. One reporter attended one year wearing a wedding gown to propose to Tom Brady. There was a reporter from Austria who dressed as Mozart.

SUPER BOWL OPENING NIGHT IS THE TONE-SETTING, ENERGY-INFUSING KICKOFF EVENT OF THE WEEK. ... AND IT CONTINUES TO EVOLVE.

The appetite for Media Day grew so big that during planning for Super Bowl XLVI in Indianapolis, organizers wanted to allow fans to get even closer to the scene. So they sold about 2,500 tickets for $25 each, and on the Tuesday morning before the Giants and Patriots played, the NFL gave every fan who entered Media Day a tiny radio that could be tuned to individual player interviews.

"I remember Tom Brady saying how wonderful the people in Indianapolis are, and the audience reacted to it. They cheered," says Frank Supovitz, the former senior vice president of events for the NFL and now the president of Fast Traffic Events and Entertainment. "And Tom Brady looked up and said, 'You can hear me?' And people cheered again. Then we knew we had something. And eventually that became Opening Night, and it got a little bigger and we included entertainment for the crowd. It was marching toward what it is today."

Among the many attractions for Super Bowl XLVIII was a toboggan ride in New York City's Times Square. An estimated 1.5 million fans streamed through Super Bowl Village during the week leading up to the game.

MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

What it is today is the tone-setting, energy-infusing kickoff event of the week that gives fans their first glimpse of the Super Bowl teams. And it continues to evolve; last year, a robot held a tablet that allowed children who were in a Phoenix hospital to ask questions of the Eagles and Chiefs.

So many of what have become signature events of the week sprung from happenstance and Rozelle's desire to hype the growing league. Some of the earliest corporate hospitality pregame tailgate parties — which are now massive gatherings with headliner entertainment — started in 1985 because organizers wanted to encourage fans to get to Stanford Stadium early to ease traffic flow in Palo Alto.

Radio Row — now occasionally called Media Row (a nod to the dozens of podcasts and TV and web shows that have joined the radio stations) — debuted in 1992 when sports radio hosts Mike Francesa and Christopher Russo, better known as Mike and the Mad Dog, wanted to do their show from the lobby of the host hotel in Minneapolis. By

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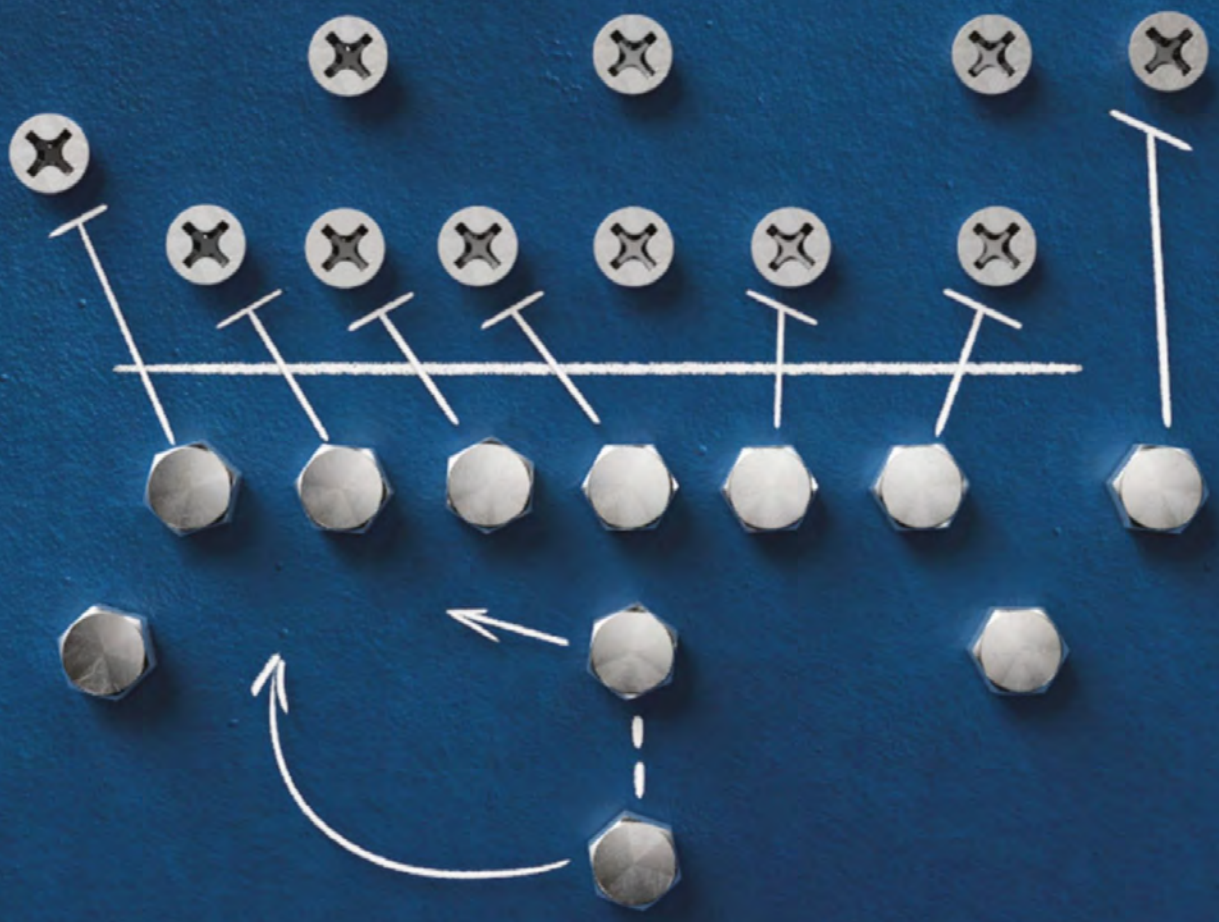

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Imagine Dragons headlined one of the shows at last year's three-night Super Bowl Music Fest in Arizona.

Super Bowl XL in Detroit, the NFL decided to open the media center to fans because members of the media had become celebrities in their own right.

The Super Bowl Experience, a week-long interactive festival and football theme park that is the most hands-on link to the Super Bowl for hundreds of thousands of fans each year, began because, as Steeg put it, one of his vices is collecting baseball and football cards. In 1990, the NFL erected a giant tent on the upper level of the Superdome's parking deck and threw a card show, inviting former players to sign autographs. About 30,000 people showed up.

"The next year, I said, 'Maybe we do something different,'" Steeg recalls. "'How about making it a mall? Maybe another anchor was the merchandise tent. Get NFL Films to put a theater in and fill it with other stuff.' Originally, it was something else for people to do other than parties. Then it was transformed into the NFL Experience."

In Indianapolis, the Host Committee created a Super Bowl Village, replete with concert stages and a massive zip line through downtown. When the Super Bowl was in New York in 2014, Super Bowl Boulevard ran down Broadway. Fans attempted field goals, took a two-block-long toboggan ride, and watched as former Giants defensive lineman Justin Tuck delivered the Lombardi Trophy to a display case where everyone could see it. A million and a half people streamed through.

Tuck's appearance at Super Bowl Boulevard is a microcosm of the real draw of the week. While stars of music and movies are part of the blur of activity, the biggest stars are the players themselves, past and present. At Super Bowl XLVI in 2012, the NFL created the football equivalent of the Grammys and the Oscars: *NFL Honors*, an awards show that celebrates the best players, performances, and moments of the season and introduces the newest members of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

The idea was simple: take all the awards that used to be announced in a series of press releases and give them their own big stage by announcing them in one night, in front of a live audience and television cameras. Now held on the Thursday before the game, *Honors* is the emotional and sartorial high point of the buildup to the Super Bowl.

That night is also the launch of the weekend, when the host city is jammed with visitors and locals celebrating the impending game, especially this year.

"Vegas is buzzing on Super Bowl Sunday when the Super Bowl is somewhere else," O'Reilly says. "It will be that much more buzzy on a Sunday when it's there."

For years, those nights just before the game featured lots of pop-up music events, many of them not even an official part of the Super Bowl but staged by companies and groups that wanted to be attached to that buzz. In 2019, at Super Bowl LIII in Atlanta, the NFL started the Super Bowl Music Fest, three nights of music that attracts big-time performers, many on the cusp of being halftime show-level acts. To make it unique, each night begins with an NFL Films recap of the season played from the stage and has NFL legends introduce the musical acts. The concert series is now a core Super Bowl event.

There are still more events in the works, for Las Vegas and beyond. The NFL is likely to expand the hosting of official watch parties in host cities — a huge success last year in Arizona — and around the world, a way to allow even the farthest-flung fans to experience the communal feel of Super Bowl Sunday. To make all football fans feel like they are close enough to the Super Bowl to sit on a pool deck, chatting up the quarterback.

Judy Battista is an award-winning journalist who has covered the NFL since 2000. She is the senior national columnist for NFL.com and on-air reporter for NFL Network and NFL Plus.

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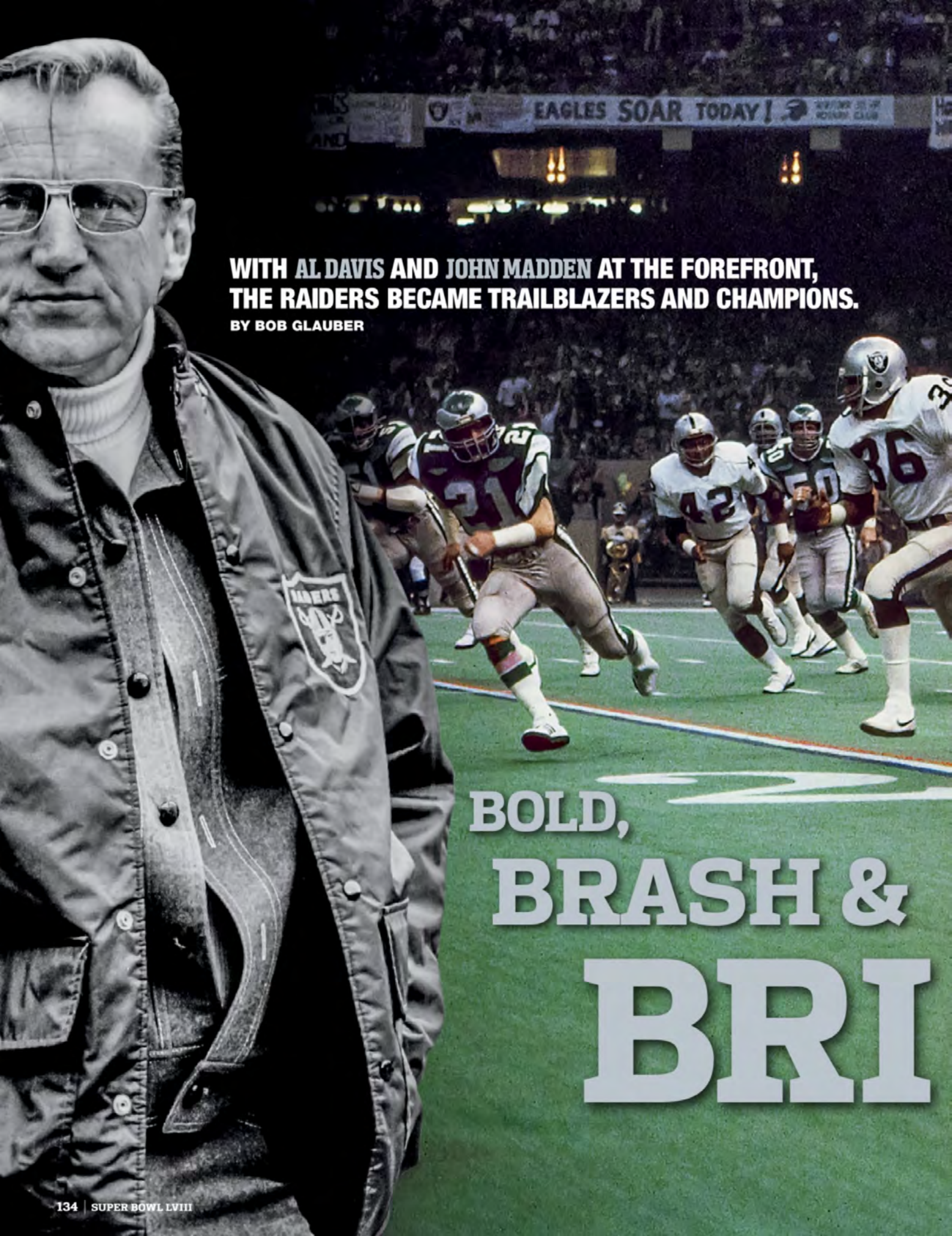
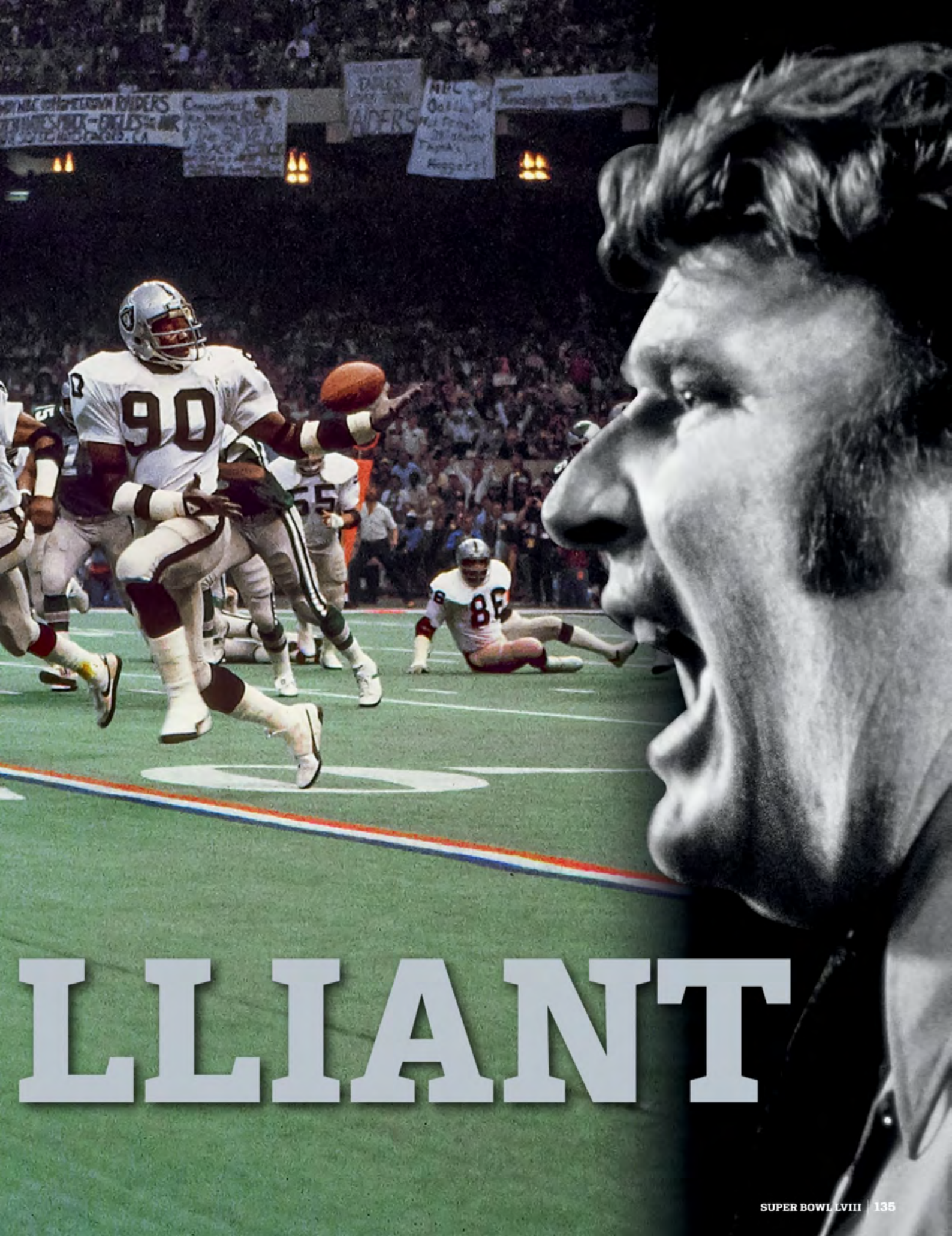


WITH AL DAVIS AND JOHN MADDEN AT THE FOREFRONT, THE RAIDERS BECAME TRAILBLAZERS AND CHAMPIONS.

BY BOB GLAUBER

BOLD, BRASH & BRI



LLIANT

They are some of the most iconic moments in Raiders history, images that immediately conjure powerful memories of players, coaches, and games that are part of the fabric of football lore.

- Marcus Allen running to his left on a play called "17 Bob Trey O" in Super Bowl XVIII against Washington — and then instinctively reversing course to turn what was to be a power run into a 74-yard touchdown, the signature play of his MVP performance that day.
- Kenny Stabler completing a 42-yard pass to Dave Casper to set up the game-tying field goal in what turned into a double-overtime victory over the Baltimore Colts in 1977. The play will forever be remembered as "The Ghost to the Post."
- Running back Clarence Davis, surrounded by three Miami Dolphins players, somehow coming down with a desperation pass from Stabler in the end zone to give the Raiders a 28-26 comeback win in the 1974 AFC playoffs. "The Sea of Hands" play became the stuff of legend.

But there are two images that transcend the rest when it comes to putting the story of the Raiders into proper perspective. Two snapshots of the men who transformed the franchise from fledgling American Football League original into a football juggernaut and symbol of excellence.

There is the stoic profile of an American original, Al Davis, who grew up in Brooklyn, fell in love with basketball and football, learned the lessons of his early teachers — Al Badain at Erasmus Hall, Weeb Ewbank and Sid Gillman in the AFL — and grew into a larger-than-life figure who dominated pro football as only he could.

And then there is the 32-year-old coach who Davis took a chance on, a coach who shared the owner's vision of how to build and run a football team and translated that vision into a champion. On Jan. 9, 1977, John Madden was hoisted atop his players' shoulders after the Raiders defeated the Vikings, 32-14, in Super Bowl XI. His legacy was cemented as a coach, but he eventually transcended the game itself with a broadcasting career that allowed him to share his everyman personality with a sports world that celebrated him like no other.

"Al Davis and John Madden were the essence of the Raiders," says former All-Pro linebacker Phil Villapiano, who was part of Madden's Super Bowl team and fit in with an unforgettable cast of players — and characters — that included Stabler, John Matuszak, Ted Hendricks, and Gene Upshaw. "I was very lucky to be drafted by the Raiders and have two people like Al Davis and John Madden calling the shots. I don't think you can find two better football guys. And that Raider mystique. There was nothing like it."

It was a team created in the image of a legendary football man whose brash style and aggressive approach permeated every corner of the franchise soon after he was hired as head coach and general manager on Jan. 18, 1963. Davis knew the football business, but he also knew how to reach people, and his openness to a diversity of opinions — and people — unlocked new ways of doing things to build a better team.

Just ask Ron Wolf, the Hall of Fame general manager who turned the Packers into champions in the 1990s but got his start with the Raiders shortly after Davis took over as coach.

"I'd worked in Chicago in 1962 for *Pro Football Illustrated*, a football newspaper, and the editor of the paper happened to be in San Francisco in the spring of 1963," Wolf recalls. "His sister was getting married, and when he was out there, he did an interview with Al Davis. During that interview, Al mentioned that he needed someone who knew about players, and Al brought me out there on a trial basis in 1963, and we stayed employed. My basis for everything is ingrained in his legacy and his teaching."

Another of Davis' early disciples: Hall of Fame coach Bill Parcells.

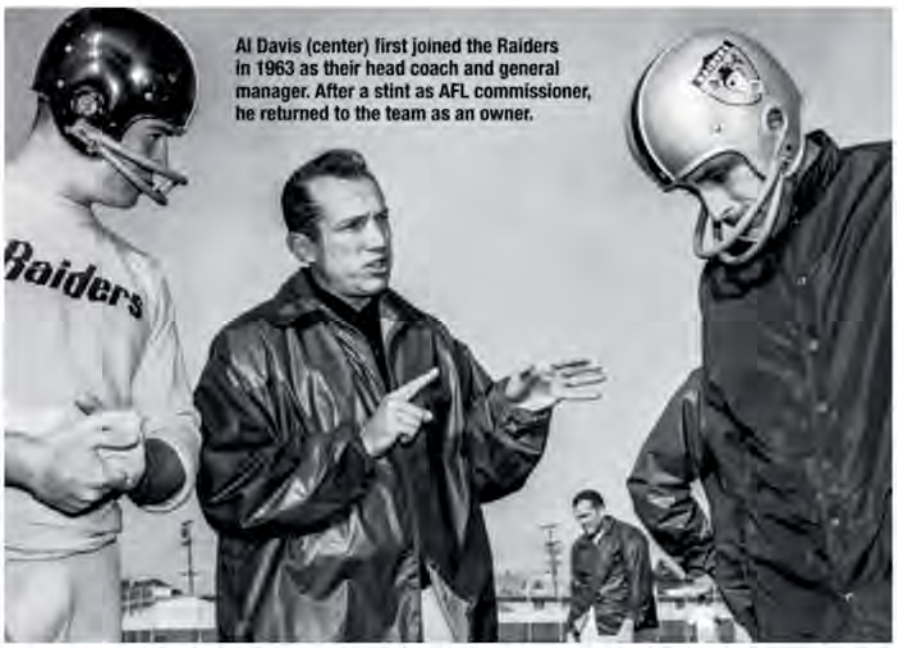
"This was after my senior season in college, and I was playing in an all-star game in Corpus Christi, Texas, and Al was coaching the team," Parcells says. "You got like $500 if you won the game. We'd just had a baby girl, and I was in school, so that $500 meant something."

Parcells suffered a broken hand in a practice before the game, but he played anyway. After the game, which Parcells' team won, Davis went up to the young offensive lineman.

"He came by, put his arm around my neck, and he said, 'Thanks a lot,' and he gave me another $200," Parcells recalls. "The doctor had said, 'You don't need to play,' but I needed to play. I never forgot that."

It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship, and Parcells solicited Davis' advice on countless occasions. And in many ways, it was Davis who helped Parcells settle down after a rocky start as head coach of the New York Giants and set the stage for his two Super Bowl victories.

"I loved him," Parcells says. "If it wasn't for him, I'd have made a lot of mistakes that I didn't end up making. He told me, 'Slow down,' and he started giving me the owner's viewpoint, the GM's viewpoint."



Al Davis (center) first joined the Raiders in 1963 as their head coach and general manager. After a stint as AFL commissioner, he returned to the team as an owner.

Previous spread: SPORTING NEWS/GETTY IMAGES (Al Davis); RICHARD MACKSON/GETTY IMAGES; SYLVIA ALLEN/GETTY IMAGES (Allen); (Madden)
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John Madden's tenure as Raiders head coach ranks as one of the most successful in NFL history. His .759 winning percentage is the best of anyone with at least 100 regular-season wins, and his postseason résumé includes a victory in Super Bowl XI.

The breadth of experience Davis shared was extraordinary. Historic, in fact. Consider that Davis is the NFL's only man to ever hold the positions of scout, assistant coach, head coach, general manager, commissioner, and owner.

"The guy did it all," says longtime general manager Ernie Accorsi, noting Davis' early work in the NFL with the Colts. "He had such a great understanding of the game and all that went into it, and his experience at doing so many things set him apart."

After leaving the Colts, Davis worked as an assistant at The Citadel and Southern Cal, then signed on as Gillman's wide receivers coach with the Chargers from 1960-62. From there, Davis began his legendary run with the Raiders, where the first change he made was the team's uniform colors. No more black, gold, and white; Davis chose silver and black, a combination that soon became one of the most recognizable in pro sports.

The results on the field were just as immediate and transformative. Davis inherited a 1-13 team but went 10-4 in 1963 and was named the AFL's Coach of the Year. Yet Davis' most enduring legacy would begin to take shape in 1966, having commanded the kind of respect among his peers and being asked to become AFL commissioner.

Davis was intent on building the rival league into a powerhouse, but just two months into his tenure, an AFL-NFL merger was approved. Davis had hoped to remain the AFL's commissioner, but it was decided that the NFL's Pete Rozelle would oversee the entire operation.

"Al really didn't want the merger," Accorsi says. "He had a bunch of players ready to jump to the AFL, and I think he would have loved to keep it separate. He was ready to go to war over it."

But Davis was overruled by league owners, and he returned to the Raiders, only this time as a part owner. He purchased a 10-percent share of the team for $18,000, became head of football operations, and hired John Rauch as his head coach.

It would be a prelude to years-long battles against the NFL establishment, as Davis engaged the league in several lawsuits while attempting to move the Raiders to Los Angeles — which he eventually did. And it created great enmity among several owners.

"Al was tremendously passionate about the points that were being litigated," stresses former Raiders president Amy Trask. "He wanted what was best for the Raiders and what was best for the league. It doesn't always mean he didn't love the league. He did."

Along the way, Davis provided a road map for building teams and hiring coaches and executives that was trailblazing. He was the first to appoint a female president in Trask; Art Shell's hiring in 1989 broke the color barrier for African American head coaches in the modern NFL; Tom Flores was the first Hispanic head coach; and Davis' willingness to draft and sign players regardless of their background was exemplary.

On the field, the Raiders became synonymous with excellence, and "Just win, baby" was stamped as Davis' mantra. The playoffs and the Super Bowl soon emerged as regular destinations for his franchise, as Rauch led the Raiders to the 1967 AFL championship before losing to the Packers in Super Bowl II. Two years later, the partnership with Madden was born when Davis promoted the young assistant to head coach.

"Who the heck names a guy 32 years old as a head coach?" Madden asked rhetorically during his Hall of Fame induction speech. "Al Davis did. He was a guy that gave me an opportunity and brought me into pro football."

Madden justified Davis' conviction with brilliant work over the next 10 years, amassing a .759 winning percentage that is the highest among coaches with at least 100 career victories. Madden possessed a great football mind and was consumed with being the best, which ultimately shortened his run, but he also had a personality perfect for what the Raiders were all about: in-your-face, unapologetic, and willing to accept the different personalities of his players.

The result was an intimidating presence by a team that won seven Western Division titles, produced eight playoff appearances, and won Super Bowl XI after a 13-1 record in 1976. The fact that Super Bowl LVIII will be played at the Raiders' home stadium nearly half a century later is a fitting tribute to the two men who combined to build one of the NFL's great dynasties.

"His personality was the key," Villapiano says of Madden. "Everybody could be themselves, and somehow or another, we blended very well together. He didn't care how we were acting, as long as we won."

But by the end of the 1978 season, Madden knew it was over. Football had consumed him. Davis needed a new voice to guide his team, and rather than try to duplicate Madden's aura, he turned to Flores, his old quarterback. Where Madden was a fiery leader who wore his heart on his sleeve, Flores offered a more laid-back style that was equally effective.

And the results were superior once more, with Flores helping former No. 1 overall pick Jim Plunkett resurrect his career with two Super Bowl victories. The 1980 Raiders became the first Wild Card team to win a Super Bowl when they beat the Eagles in Super Bowl XV. Three years later, they walloped Washington in Super Bowl XVIII.

These would be the halcyon days of Super Bowl greatness for the Raiders, who have only been back to the big game once since then. But there is no denying their place in history and the legacy of winning that Davis presided over in partnership with two of the game's greatest coaches.

Davis, Madden, and Flores would all take their rightful places in Canton, their busts on display in football's hallowed ground and perhaps engaged in conversation the way Madden envisioned when he was enshrined in the Hall of Fame in 2006.

"I believe that the busts talk to each other," Madden famously said. "Vince Lombardi, Knute Rockne, Reggie (White), Walter Payton, all my ex-players. We'll be there forever and ever and ever talking about whatever. That's what I believe, and no one is ever going to talk me out of that."

Bob Glauber covered the NFL for 37 seasons and was New York Newsday*'s NFL columnist from 1993-2022. He was the 2021 winner of the Bill Nunn Jr. Career Achievement Award by the Professional Football Writers of America.*

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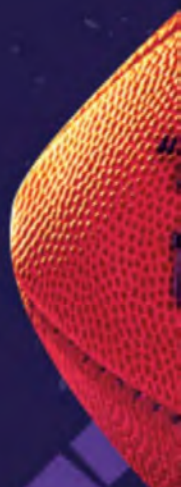

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The national flags of the US and Germany are spread across the field at Deutsche Bank Park prior to the Chiefs-Dolphins clash on Nov. 5. It marked the first NFL regular-season game played in Frankfurt.

Titans safety Amani Hooker soaks up the atmosphere as he runs onto the field for the team's October game against the Ravens at London's Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

BY EMBRACING NEW MARKETS AND EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PLAYERS, THE NFL'S INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE IS GROWING EACH DAY.

BY NEIL REYNOLDS

MARKUS SCHREIBER/AP IMAGES (Opposite page); IAN WALTON/AP IMAGES

The Colts' Josh Downs extends to make a reception against the Patriots during a November contest in Frankfurt.

RALF IBING/GETTY IMAGES

AS THE INDIANAPOLIS COLTS BROKE THE HUDDLE following a TV timeout during their contest with the New England Patriots in Frankfurt, Germany, in November, a hearty rendition of Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline" was being belted out by more than 50,000 full-throated fans.

Colts quarterback Gardner Minshew called out his signals at the line and the music stopped ... but the fans and the party didn't! Minshew escaped a safety blitz and threw the ball away to the backdrop of "good times never seemed so good."

Calling the league's fifth and final regular-season game in Europe this season, NFL Network anchor Rich Eisen remarked: "Minshew, amidst the Neil Diamond, throws it away. That's a first for everybody involved, I would imagine."

It was a forgettable play in the Colts' 10-6 win, but it was also a hugely symbolic moment. Tradition, of course, dictates that music is stopped and fans halt any singing when the action resumes on the field. But we are living in 'no limits' times when it comes to the NFL's international adventures.

And to paraphrase Neil Diamond one last time, the good times have indeed never seemed so good.

Dream as big as you like when it comes to the globalization of the NFL, and the league will dream bigger. Conjure up an ideal location for a regular-season game in some far-flung corner of the planet, and the NFL will likely have already eyed said market and researched the possibility of taking the sport of American football to the fans in that country.

That bold approach is why, in addition to three games in the United Kingdom and one in Germany, the NFL will be playing in a new market in 2024. In December, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell announced that a regular-season game will take place in São Paulo, Brazil. It's part of a strategy that will see the NFL grow its international inventory to at least eight games in 2025.

"We're responding to fan interest," Goodell says. "The NFL owners completely understand the potential. Every one of our teams has played an International Series regular-season game and every single one of them comes back with the exact same reaction: that there is really something powerful here and that there is an opportunity for us to become a global sport."

NFL Executive Vice President of Club Business and League Events Peter O'Reilly adds: "It comes down to a growing fan base around the world. Whichever country we're playing in, there's such joy there. And you know it's not just a moment in time; it's sustainable because there is a passionate, well-educated football crowd in there."

Eisen agrees: "I say to any fans in America who push back on international growth, 'You think you're a die-hard fan? Would

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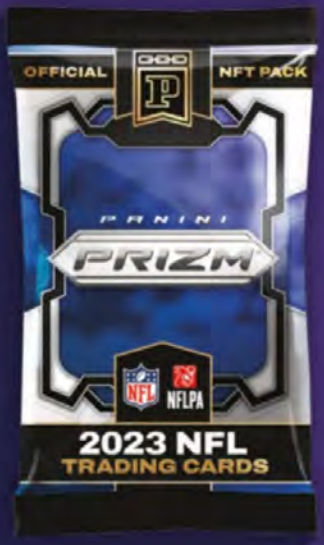

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Fans stream into London's Wembley Stadium for October's Jaguars-Falcons game. Since the 2013 season, the Jaguars have played 11 contests in London.

STEVE LUCIANO/AP IMAGES

you watch *Sunday Night* ***Football*** if it began after 1 a.m.?' And they often say, 'Hell, no!' So, then I say to them, 'Well, guess who does? The folks in the UK and Germany.' These are passionate fan bases. I love being in Europe for these games, and they are historic."

What comes next could change the NFL as we know it. There is ongoing chatter about franchises in London and Germany or even a European division spread across both countries. But there is an alternative Formula 1-type model that could see the NFL play multiple games with a hypothetical season of the future taking place in London, Frankfurt, Munich, Madrid, Paris, Dublin, Mexico City, São Paolo, and perhaps even further afield to Australia.

"I actually went to my first Formula 1 event in Montreal in June," Goodell explains. "Just to see it and experience it and to see what we could learn from that. We have talked about that approach. I do expect to be expanding our regular-season (international) series pretty dramatically."

O'Reilly adds: "Right now, with the Jacksonville Jaguars playing at Wembley Stadium, we've just played five games in a season. Could that increase? Could we get to a world where just about half our weeks have that moment and we potentially build out that 9.30 a.m. Eastern time window?"

Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes — who led his team to a 21-14 victory over the Dolphins in Frankfurt in November — has his passport at the ready and is on board with international expansion, stressing: "I'm excited to get back over here to play in Frankfurt, Munich, or wherever else the NFL goes. I'm up for anything."

The first of the five regular-season games in Europe this year saw the Jaguars record a 23-7 win over the Falcons at Wembley. It would prove to be the start of a five-game winning streak. Seven days later, the Jags upended the Bills, 25-20, in a raucous atmosphere at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

During his team's two weeks in London, Jaguars owner Shahid Khan stressed: "[For] the fans we have in London, the UK, and across Europe, this is another way for us to connect with them and really develop the Jaguars. We'd like for it to continue in the future."

Goodell adds: "We work really hard to try to do something different each year so we can learn from it. We played the Jaguars two weeks back-to-back in two different stadiums in the UK, and they went back to the States and played the next weekend. You learn from that and get a reaction from the players. All of that goes into our thinking about the possibilities for the future."

The passion of the British fans made a significant impact on members of the Ravens as they defeated the Titans, 24-16, in the third regular-season game in the UK.

Ravens head coach John Harbaugh said: "The fans in the UK are great. They were loud, and I loved the singing. It was like a home game and like an NFL game as far as the fans. They know the game over here. That was impressive to see."

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British offensive lineman Daniel Akinkunmi took daily three-hour train rides to attend the NFL Academy. That dedication earned him a scholarship to the University of Oklahoma.

ABOVE: Lamonte Winston (left) was appointed the head of NFL Academy in 2023. He previously served as the executive director of player development for the Chiefs. LEFT: Born in Lagos, Nigeria, Emmanuel Okoye developed his skills at the NFL Academy and now attends the University of Tennessee, where he plays tight end.

"It was phenomenal," added Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson, who threw for 223 yards and a touchdown and rushed for 62 yards in the London win. "The atmosphere was crazy."

The positive feedback was just as strong in Frankfurt — site of the first World League of American Football game in 1991 — as the city hosted NFL regular-season action for the first time.

Mahomes described the experience as "amazing," cornerback Trent McDuffie pointed to a "playoff atmosphere," and safety Mike Edwards labeled the German crowd "electric."

Victorious Chiefs head coach Andy Reid said: "It was something. We've been to London, Mexico, and Germany, and all of them have been phenomenal trips. It's great for the NFL. You see what it's done for basketball and baseball, and there's no reason why it can't do that for football."

The NFL's international blueprint extends beyond playing regular-season games abroad. In October, the NFL Academy — featuring 62 student-athletes from 13 countries around the world — defeated American high school opposition for the first time with a 31-14 victory over IMG Academy at Loughborough University. They followed that with a 35-0 blanking of Brooklyn's Erasmus Hall at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium four days later.

Those wins are the latest success stories to come out of the high school program that opened in September 2019. In October, British offensive lineman Daniel Akinkunmi, who received more than 35 scholarship offers to play in the US, committed to play for the University of Oklahoma.

Head of NFL Academy Lamonte Winston says: "The NFL Academy continues to provide life-changing opportunities for talented young athletes from around the world to excel both in education and elite sport performance."

Prior to that headline-making move, 18-year-old Nigerian Emmanuel Okoye committed to the University of Tennessee after being discovered by two-time Super Bowl champion Osi Umenyiora and his "The Uprise" scouts. Okoye went from Lagos, Nigeria, to Tennessee via the NFL Academy.

Umenyiora says: "What an incredible moment for Emmanuel. Increasing the number of international athletes in the league is a long-term strategic priority for the NFL, and there is a wealth of talent from around the world that, given the opportunity, will make a significant impact on the game in years to come."

"I'm just so proud of the NFL Academy," O'Reilly adds. "The speed in which you have seen their progression on the field is incredible. People's eyes are now open to the talent that exists around the world."

Building on the strength of Umenyiora's efforts in Africa, six Nigerian players entered the NFL via the league's International Player Pathway Program in 2023. And beginning next year, each of the league's 32 teams will carry an extra practice squad spot for an international player.

O'Reilly explains: "That's about the best athletes in the world having a pathway to the NFL, but it's also about connecting to a home community and creating that local hero in the way that Jordan Mailata (Eagles) is seen in Australia or the way Efe Obada (Commanders) is seen in the UK."

Through regular-season games in the UK and Germany, the upcoming contest in Brazil and an inevitable return to Mexico — coupled with the NFL Academy and International Player Pathway Program — the league continues to make international headlines. And that will only magnify in the coming years as flag football becomes an official sport of the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles.

Goodell concludes: "We now get the chance to share our game with fans all over the world, and we do it through a variety of ways. We no longer have to work to get our clubs to do this — they are actually coming to us and saying, 'We hear you're thinking of playing in Brazil or Spain. We would like to be the team.' It shows how far we have come.

"This is a unique time to advance our growth, particularly internationally. It may be the single most important growth moment in our history."

Neil Reynolds is the anchor of Sky Sports' television coverage of the NFL in the United Kingdom and also writes for NFL.com/UK and SkySports.com/NFL.

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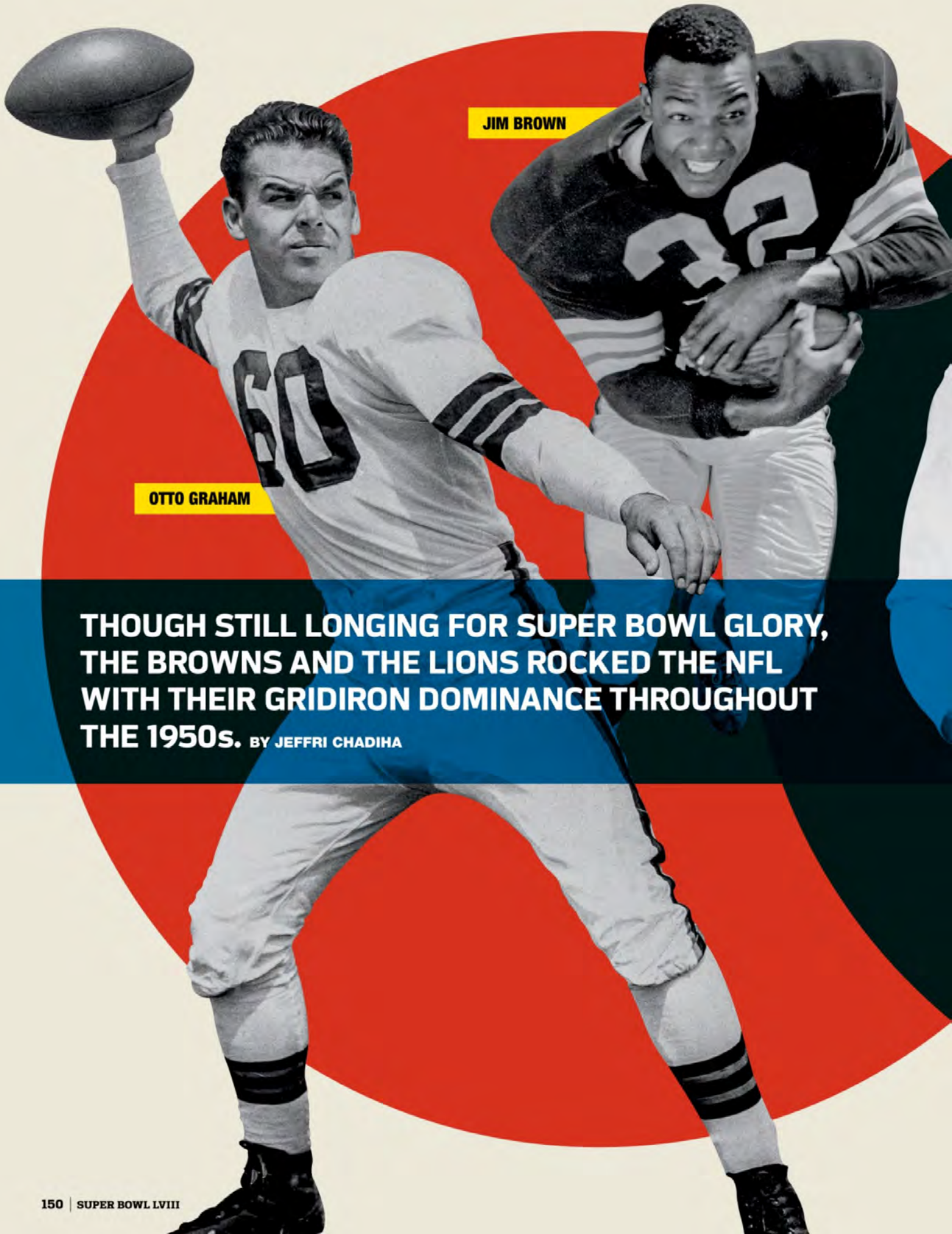
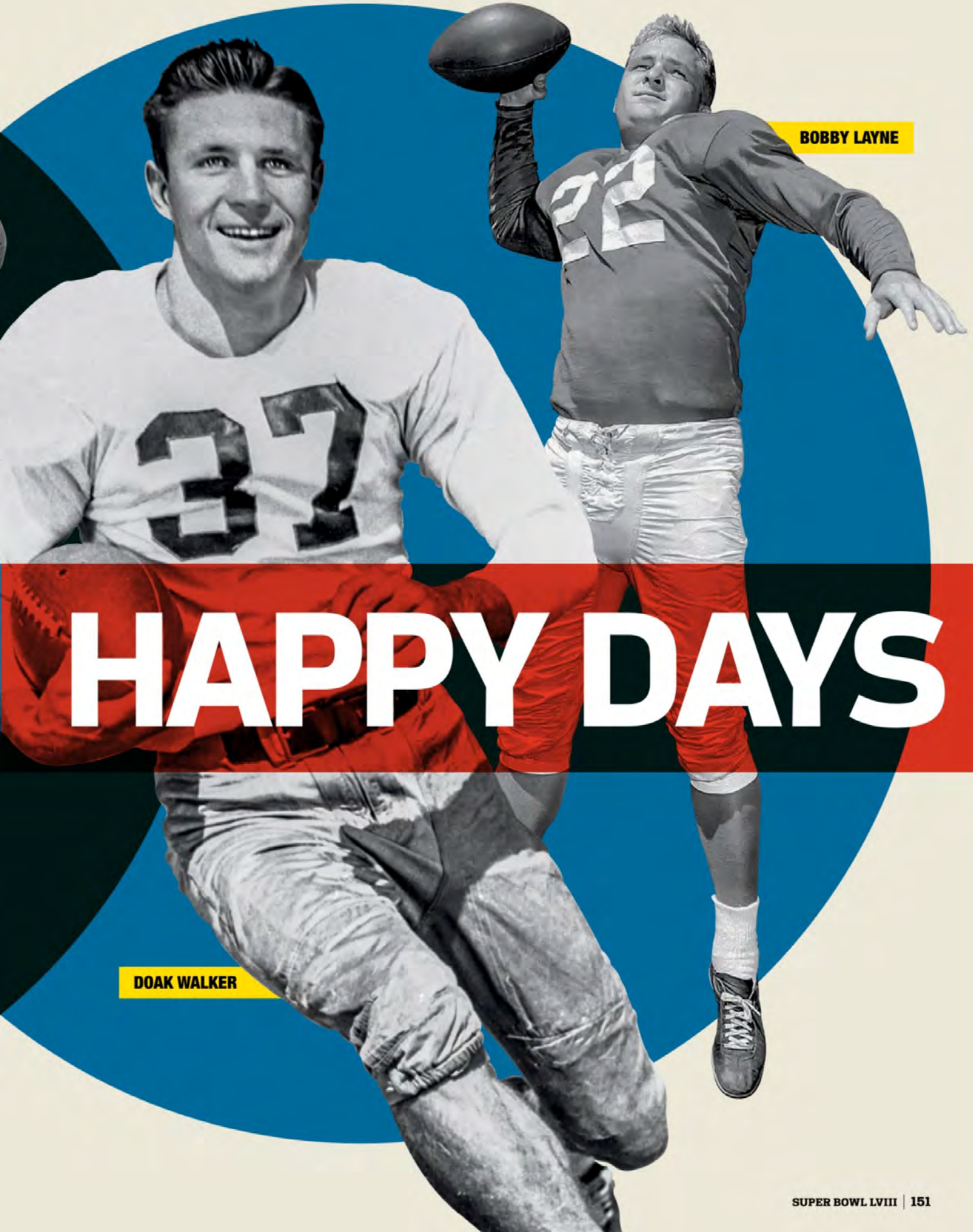


THOUGH STILL LONGING FOR SUPER BOWL GLORY, THE BROWNS AND THE LIONS ROCKED THE NFL WITH THEIR GRIDIRON DOMINANCE THROUGHOUT THE 1950s. BY JEFFRI CHADIHA



HAPPY DAYS

Browns quarterback Otto Graham (center) is congratulated by his father, Otto (left), and head coach Paul Brown after Cleveland's 56-10 win over the Lions in the 1954 NFL title game. Graham threw for three TDs and ran for three more in the victory.

Dick LeBeau scanned the fields at the Cleveland Browns' 1959 training camp and quietly wondered how this was all going to work out.

A barrel-chested star running back named Jim Brown rambled through frustrated tacklers. A more diminutive ball carrier, Bobby Mitchell, slashed and juked past other hapless defenders. LeBeau had been a longtime Browns fan, but after joining the powerhouse franchise that summer as a fifth-round draft pick, he thought only one thing during his first practice: *How in the hell am I ever going to make this team?*

LeBeau didn't last long — the former two-way standout at Ohio State was cut during camp — but his NFL journey exposed him to two of the most compelling teams of the 1950s and early '60s. If he had stuck with Cleveland, LeBeau would have been part of a franchise that ultimately won four league championships between 1950 and 1964. Instead, he developed into a Hall of Fame cornerback with the Detroit Lions, a franchise that had collected three titles of its own between 1952 and 1957. The Browns and Lions were so good that they combined for six championships in an eight-year span.

That dominance has been reduced to a distant memory in the NFL's Super Bowl era. The Browns and Lions entered 2023 as two of the four franchises yet to play in the league's marquee event — joining Jacksonville and Houston — but for an extended stretch in the middle of the 20th century, they were the standard of excellence.

"The Browns won their first championship in 1950, and the Lions got their first (of that era) in 1952," says the 86-year-old LeBeau, who played for Detroit from 1959-72 before embarking on a 45-year coaching career. "After that, they were both playing for the championship almost every year — and most of the time against each other. What I remember most about those games was how explosive the offenses were. You could see that by the scores."

The Lions and the Browns squared off for the NFL title four times, but the contests LeBeau refers to involved 1954 and 1957. Cleveland won the first meeting, 56-10. Detroit exacted its revenge three years later, blowing out the Browns by a score of 59-14. Both teams had the potential to dominate any opponent because they were blessed with ridiculous talent.

That talent started with a stud quarterback: Otto Graham was Cleveland's on-field leader, and Detroit followed the swashbuckling Bobby Layne. There were sensational players everywhere, including Lions legends Doak Walker, Joe Schmidt, and Jack Christiansen, and Browns icons Lou Groza, Dante Lavelli, and Marion Motley. Both franchises even nurtured some of the league's greatest coaches. Chuck Noll and Don Shula played in Cleveland, while Weeb Ewbank, who won two NFL championships with Baltimore and Super Bowl III with the New York Jets, was a Browns assistant.

Of course, the Browns also featured Jim Brown, whose death in May 2023 resulted in countless fans celebrating his stature as arguably the best player in league history.

"People ask me what Jim's feature quality was, and I always say he had everything," explains Paul Wiggin, who played defensive end for Cleveland from 1957-67 and currently serves as a player

Previous spread: AP IMAGES (Graham, Layne). HENRY BARR COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES (Brown). BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES (Walker)
This page: AP IMAGES

Guy Fieri's FLAVORTOWN

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personnel consultant for the Minnesota Vikings. "When he walked into the locker room, you were happy he was on your side."

As much as the NFL was a running league back then, the Browns and Lions stood out for their ability to throw. They annually ranked among the best in the league in passing, with Graham and Layne experts at dissecting opposing defenses. Familiarity also was a factor, as the league only had 12 teams and rosters were limited (teams could only have 33 players in 1950, a number that increased to 36 in 1959). It was even common for players to learn offensive and defensive positions, just to compensate for that lack of depth.

Says LeBeau: "You only had six teams in the east and six teams in the west. So, once you got to the top, there weren't many people around to knock you off. And if you had an all-star quarterback, you really had a leg up on everybody else."

The Lions and Browns would be even more celebrated if timing had been on their side. Unfortunately, they thrived in an era when the NFL was still finding its footing nationally. Baseball was America's most treasured sport during the 1950s, and it wasn't until Ewbank's Colts beat the New York Giants in the 1958 NFL Championship Game that pro football spiked in popularity. That overtime classic drew a television audience of 45 million people and propelled the NFL into a whole new stratosphere.

Before that moment arrived, many of the same men who became NFL stars grew up idolizing baseball players. Ernie Green, a running back who joined the Browns as a rookie in 1962, remembers the buzz in his hometown of Columbus, Ga., when Peach State native Jackie Robinson played an exhibition there. Ben Davis, a cornerback and return specialist who played for both Cleveland and Detroit between 1967 and 1976, notes that "there were more Little League baseball teams than [youth] football teams in my neighborhood growing up in Alabama. But you knew about the Browns. We used to joke that they were named for Joe Louis because they had Black players. That made it easy for somebody like me to become a Browns fan."

The Browns obviously were named for one man: Paul Brown. He co-founded the franchise, served as its first head coach, and eventually created a legacy that made him one of the most revered men in NFL history. Brown's innovations were myriad, including the playbook, the face mask, intelligence testing for players, and film study of opponents. His coaching style was both meticulous and domineering, as all his players understood the importance of avoiding his wrath.

Green recalled a game early in his career when a punter shanked a kick at a critical juncture. The miscue irritated Brown so much that he charged onto the field to confront the stunned player.

"Paul met the guy at the hash mark and told him, 'Kicker — that will be the last time you kick for me,'" Green recalls. "He didn't even say the guy's name. He just called him 'kicker.'"

Cleveland's Jim Brown (top right) was on the losing side in the 1957 title game as a rookie, but played with the Browns for nearly a decade and was part of their most recent NFL championship team in 1964. Otto Graham (14) delivers a pass in the Browns' 1954 victory over Detroit, Cleveland's only win in four championship game clashes between the teams.

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Bobby Layne (22) led Detroit to a dramatic win over Cleveland in the 1953 NFL Championship Game, throwing a late TD pass that gave his team a 17-16 victory. It was the second straight year the Lions beat the Browns for the title.

"Paul expected perfection," adds Jim Ray Smith, who played guard and defensive end for the Browns from 1956-62. "You'd go into training camp, he'd give you a playbook, and it was a $500 fine if you lost it. That was a lot of money when you're only getting paid $8,000 a year."

Brown's Cleveland teams dominated from their inception. They won all four championships in the All-American Football Conference from 1946-49, then played in six consecutive title games after joining the NFL in 1950. Yet while Paul Brown coveted men who would bend to his will, Lions head coach Buddy Parker was far less tyrannical in leading Detroit to titles in 1952 and 1953 (Parker abruptly resigned prior to the 1957 season). The Lions were reputed for their partying, with Layne serving as the ringleader.

Those Detroit teams also knew how to handle business on the field.

"We had some good young players and some older guys who had played in a lot of big games," says Steve Junker, who spent the 1957 and 1959-60 seasons with the Lions. "We were really equipped to handle tough situations."

Detroit undoubtedly was a juggernaut, with 14 Lions players from that era making the Pro Football Hall of Fame (Cleveland boasted 13). The Lions also played with confidence and physicality, exemplified by their 1957 championship win over Cleveland. Underdogs heading into the contest, they knocked Browns quarterbacks Tommy O'Connell and Milt Plum out of a game that turned into a blowout.

As Junker says, "Everything went right for us, and everything went wrong for them."

That would be the final time those powerhouses clashed on such a stage. The Lions traded Layne to Pittsburgh in 1958, and he infamously predicted they wouldn't win another title for 50 years after his departure. Paul Brown eventually sold his ownership stake in the Browns to Art Modell in 1961 but remained on as head coach. It was a marriage fraught with conflict, and Modell replaced him less than two years later (promoting assistant Blanton Collier and letting Brown play out his contract as a vice president with no power).

Brown's autocratic style may have worn on some players but there was still plenty of respect for his prowess.

As Wiggin says, "I've always thought command was the most important part of being a head coach, and Paul had that quality. We won another championship after he was done but everything after 1957 was about Jim Brown. We just had great players."

As much as pro football changed in the 1960s — from the explosion of television coverage to league expansion to the arrival of the American Football League — the impact of those Browns and Lions teams can't be denied. The problem is that history isn't always fair. The Super Bowl is one of the world's biggest sporting events, and the inability of the Browns and Lions to earn a spot in that contest over its first 57 playings is something they've lamented for decades.

Davis was even speaking at an event years ago when he introduced himself as a former player who had the unfortunate distinction of playing on two teams that never reached the Super Bowl. It so happened that another former Browns player was in the audience that day: Hall of Fame offensive tackle Mike McCormack.

"Mike told everybody that the Browns and Lions were the teams to beat in the 1950s, and they won enough to last a long time," Davis says. "His point was to not minimize those teams. They did have their day."

"Time marches on, and there's always something new to talk about," LeBeau says. "But I think the thing about the American people is they have a good sense of history. There are still people who remember what both those teams did. And, hopefully, we'll find a way to keep the memories of those teams and those players alive as time goes on."

Jeffri Chadiha is a senior columnist with NFL.com and an on-air personality with NFL Network and NFL+. He won a Sports Emmy in 2009, and his book with Hall of Fame receiver Cris Carter, Going Deep: How Receivers Became The Most Compelling Figures in Pro Sports, *was published in 2013.*

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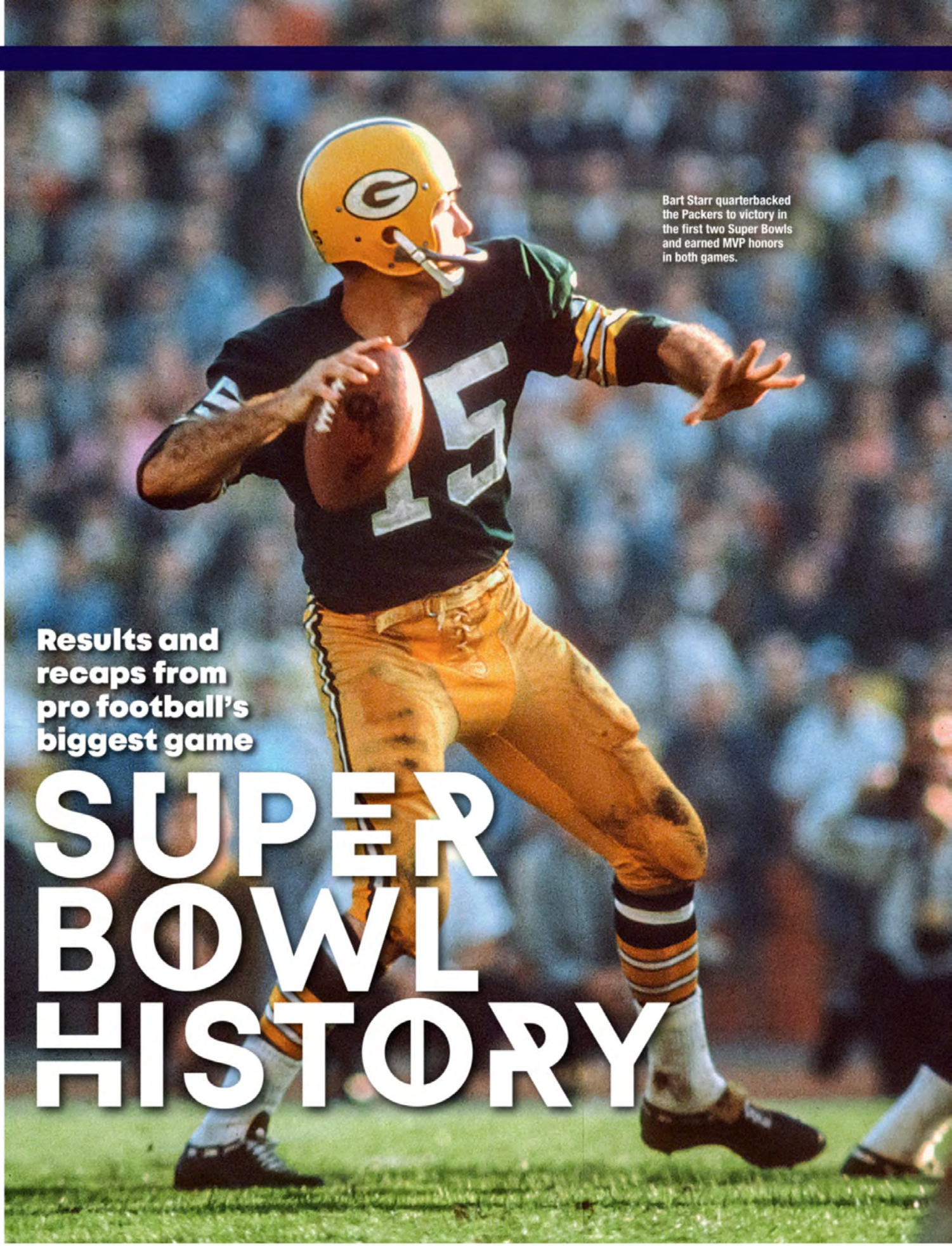

Bart Starr quarterbacked the Packers to victory in the first two Super Bowls and earned MVP honors in both games.

Results and recaps from pro football's biggest game

SUPER BOWL HISTORY

In the final game before the AFL-NFL merger became official, Len Dawson (16) and the Chiefs upended the Vikings, 23-7, in Super Bowl IV.

SUPER BOWL I

January 15, 1967
Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles
Attendance: 61,946

	1	2	3	4	F
Chiefs	0	10	0	0	**10**
Packers	7	7	14	7	**35**

MVP: Bart Starr (QB), **Packers**
16 of 23 passing, 250 yards, 2 TDs

The Packers opened the Super Bowl era by defeating the AFL champion Chiefs behind the passing of Bart Starr, the receiving of Max McGee, and a key interception by safety Willie Wood. Leading by a narrow 14-10 margin at the half, Green Bay took control with three second-half touchdowns, the first of which was set up by Wood's 50-yard interception return. McGee, filling in for an ailing Boyd Dowler after having only four receptions all season, caught seven passes for 138 yards and two touchdowns. Elijah Pitts rushed for two other Packers scores. All of the Chiefs' points came in the second quarter, including a 7-yard TD pass from Len Dawson to Curtis McClinton.

SUPER BOWL II

January 14, 1968
Orange Bowl, Miami
Attendance: 75,546

	1	2	3	4	F
Packers	3	13	10	7	**33**
Raiders	0	7	0	7	**14**

MVP: Bart Starr (QB), **Packers**
13 of 24 passing, 202 yards, 1 TD

Two weeks after capturing its third consecutive NFL championship, Green Bay won the Super Bowl for the second straight year, defeating the Raiders in a game that drew the first $3 million gate in football history. Bart Starr was efficient at QB, helping the Packers to a 16-7 halftime lead that they built upon after intermission. Don Chandler kicked four field goals for the victors, and cornerback Herb Adderley capped the Green Bay scoring with his 60-yard interception-return TD. The game marked the last for Vince Lombardi as Packers coach, ending a tenure that saw his teams win five NFL titles in seven years.

SUPER BOWL III

January 12, 1969
Orange Bowl, Miami
Attendance: 75,389

	1	2	3	4	F
Jets	0	7	6	3	**16**
Colts	0	0	0	7	**7**

MVP: Joe Namath (QB), **Jets**
17 of 28 passing, 206 yards

Jets quarterback Joe Namath "guaranteed" victory on the Thursday before Super Bowl III, then went out and delivered by leading a huge upset — beating a Colts team that had lost only once all season. Namath directed a steady attack that dominated the NFL champions, while the Jets' defense intercepted Colts quarterback Earl Morrall three times in the first half. New York had 337 total yards, including 121 on the ground from Matt Snell. Johnny Unitas, who missed most of the season with a sore elbow, came off the bench to lead Baltimore to its only touchdown late in the fourth quarter.

SUPER BOWL IV

January 11, 1970
Tulane Stadium, New Orleans
Attendance: 80,562

	1	2	3	4	F
Vikings	0	0	7	0	**7**
Chiefs	3	13	7	0	**23**

MVP: Len Dawson (QB), **Chiefs**
12 of 17 passing, 142 yards, 1 TD

The AFL squared the Super Bowl series at two victories apiece behind Len Dawson's superb quarterbacking and a powerful defense. Dawson called an almost flawless game and hit Otis Taylor on a 46-yard pass for the Chiefs' final touchdown, minutes after the Vikings scored their only points. The Kansas City defense forced five turnovers (three interceptions, two fumbles) and limited Minnesota's strong rushing game to 67 yards. Jan Stenerud provided an early spark for the Chiefs with field goals from 48, 32, and 25 yards, while Mike Garrett's 5-yard TD run before halftime made the score 16-0.

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SUPER BOWL V

January 17, 1971
Orange Bowl, Miami
Attendance: 79,204

	1	2	3	4	F
Colts	0	6	0	10	**16**
Cowboys	3	10	0	0	**13**

MVP: Chuck Howley (LB), **Cowboys**
2 interceptions, 3 tackles

A 32-yard field goal by rookie kicker Jim O'Brien delivered victory to the Colts in the first Super Bowl to be played on artificial turf. The Cowboys led, 13-6, in the fourth quarter, but interceptions by Rick Volk and Mike Curtis set up a Baltimore touchdown and O'Brien's decisive kick in the closing seconds. Johnny Unitas threw for the Colts' first touchdown — a pass that caromed off receiver Eddie Hinton's fingertips, off Dallas' Mel Renfro, and settled into the hands of tight end John Mackey, who scored on the 75-yard play. The Cowboys' Chuck Howley became the first defensive player and the first (and still only) player from a losing team to be named Super Bowl MVP.

SUPER BOWL VI

January 16, 1972
Tulane Stadium, New Orleans
Attendance: 81,023

	1	2	3	4	F
Cowboys	3	7	7	7	**24**
Dolphins	0	3	0	0	**3**

MVP: Roger Staubach (QB), **Cowboys** 12 of 19 passing, 119 yards, 2 TDs

The Cowboys rushed for 252 yards, and their defense limited the Dolphins to just 185 total yards and became the first to not allow a touchdown in the Super Bowl. Chuck Howley's recovery of a Larry Csonka fumble led to a 3-0 Dallas advantage, and Roger Staubach's TD pass to Lance Alworth made it 10-3 at the break. After the Cowboys received the second-half kickoff, Duane Thomas keyed a 71-yard march that ended with his 3-yard scoring run. Early in the fourth quarter, Howley picked off a pass that he returned deep into Miami territory, and three plays later Staubach passed 7 yards to Mike Ditka for the game's final touchdown. Thomas finished with 95 rushing yards and teammate Walt Garrison added 74.

SUPER BOWL VII

January 14, 1973
Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles
Attendance: 90,182

	1	2	3	4	F
Dolphins	7	7	0	0	**14**
Redskins	0	0	0	7	**7**

MVP: Jake Scott (S), **Dolphins**
2 interceptions

On their way to perfection, the Dolphins played virtually perfect football in Super Bowl VII. Their defense allowed Washington to cross midfield only once in the first half, and Miami's offense turned good field position into two touchdowns. The Dolphins drove 63 yards for their first score, a 28-yard pass from Bob Griese to Howard Twilley. After Washington reached the Miami 48 late in the half, linebacker Nick Buoniconti intercepted a pass that he returned 25 yards. Five plays later, just 18 seconds before intermission, Jim Kiick scored on a 1-yard run. Dolphins safety Jake Scott had two interceptions, one in the end zone that ended another Washington threat.

SUPER BOWL VIII

January 13, 1974
Rice Stadium, Houston
Attendance: 71,882

	1	2	3	4	F
Vikings	0	0	0	7	**7**
Dolphins	14	3	7	0	**24**

MVP: Larry Csonka (RB), **Dolphins**
33 carries, 145 yards, 2 TDs

Representing the AFC for the third consecutive year, the Dolphins scored the first two times they had the ball — on marches of 62 and 56 yards — while their defense limited Minnesota to only seven plays in the first quarter. Larry Csonka capped the initial 10-play drive with his 5-yard TD bolt through right guard, and another 10-play scoring drive ended with Jim Kiick bursting 1 yard up the middle. Garo Yepremian's 28-yard field goal made it 17-0. The Vikings would then drive deep into Miami territory, but were stopped on fourth-and-1 from the 6 on a big hit by middle linebacker Nick Buoniconti.

Colts linebacker Mike Curtis (32) tackles the Cowboys' Dwayne Thomas (33) during Super Bowl V. The Colts rallied with 10 fourth-quarter points to win their first Super Bowl title.

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SUPER BOWL IX

January 12, 1975
Tulane Stadium, New Orleans
Attendance: 80,997

	1	2	3	4	F
Steelers	0	2	7	7	**16**
Vikings	0	0	0	6	**6**

MVP: Franco Harris (RB), **Steelers**
34 carries, 158 yards, 1 TD

A new chapter in Steelers history began with this victory over the Vikings, the first of four Super Bowl titles won under coach Chuck Noll. Both offenses struggled through a first half that saw the only points scored when Pittsburgh's Dwight White downed quarterback Fran Tarkenton in the end zone for a safety. But it didn't take long for the Steelers to add to that lead after intermission. Minnesota's Bill Brown fumbled the second-half kickoff and Marv Kellum recovered on the Vikings 30. Four plays later, Franco Harris' 9-yard touchdown run gave his team a 9-0 lead. Pittsburgh's powerful defense permitted only 119 total yards on the day, including 17 rushing yards.

SUPER BOWL X

January 18, 1976
Orange Bowl, Miami
Attendance: 80,187

	1	2	3	4	F
Cowboys	7	3	0	7	**17**
Steelers	7	0	0	14	**21**

MVP: Lynn Swann (WR), **Steelers**
4 receptions, 161 yards, 1 TD

The Steelers captured the Super Bowl for the second straight year, helped along by Terry Bradshaw's 64-yard touchdown pass to Lynn Swann and an aggressive defense that snuffed out a late Dallas rally. The Steelers scored on Bradshaw's 7-yard TD pass to Randy Grossman, the long throw to Swann, Roy Gerela's 36- and 18-yard field goals, and Reggie Harrison's blocked punt that went through the end zone for a safety. Dallas, though, still only trailed by four when it took possession with 1:22 to go, but had its hopes dashed on Glen Edwards' end-zone interception on the game's final play.

Franco Harris (top) rushed for 158 yards on his way to winning MVP honors in Super Bowl IX, the first of four Super Bowls won by the Steelers over a six-year span. Butch Johnson (bottom) made one of the Super Bowl's most impressive catches when he hauled in a 45-yard touchdown grab during the Cowboys' 27-10 victory over the Broncos in Super Bowl XII.

SUPER BOWL XI

January 9, 1977
Rose Bowl, Pasadena
Attendance: 103,438

	1	2	3	4	F
Raiders	0	16	3	13	**32**
Vikings	0	0	7	7	**14**

MVP: Fred Biletnikoff (WR), **Raiders** 4 receptions, 79 yards

In front of 81 million television viewers, the largest audience ever to watch a sporting event, the Raiders won their first Super Bowl title. Clarence Davis rushed for 137 yards, Fred Biletnikoff made four key receptions, and the defense came up big for the victors. Oakland built a 16-0 halftime lead — on Errol Mann's 24-yard field goal, a 1-yard TD pass from Ken Stabler to Dave Casper, and Pete Banaszak's 1-yard scoring run. After the Vikings cut the deficit to 19-7, a pair of fourth-quarter interceptions clinched the championship for the Raiders. One set up Banaszak's second touchdown run, while the other resulted in cornerback Willie Brown's 75-yard interception return for a score.

SUPER BOWL XII

January 15, 1978
Superdome, New Orleans
Attendance: 75,583

	1	2	3	4	F
Cowboys	10	3	7	7	**27**
Broncos	0	0	10	0	**10**

MVPs: Randy White (DT) and **Harvey Martin** (DE), **Cowboys** Leaders of a defense that had 4 sacks and allowed just 156 yards

Super Bowl TV viewership exceeded 100 million fans for the first time, and they watched as the Cowboys forced six first-half turnovers on their way to a 13-0 halftime lead. Dallas then tacked on two second-half TDs, the first on Butch Johnson's spectacular diving catch in the end zone and the other when running back Robert Newhouse tossed a 29-yard pass to Golden Richards. As part of the win, Roger Staubach completed 17 of 25 passes for 183 yards and Tony Dorsett rushed for 68 yards, including a 3-yard TD. The game marked the first — and remains the only — time the MVP Award has been shared.

WALTER IOOSS JR./GETTY IMAGES; AP IMAGES (Butch Johnson)

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The Steelers' Lynn Swann skies for what would become a 47-yard touchdown reception from Terry Bradshaw in Super Bowl XIV. Swann caught five passes in the game, which was won by Pittsburgh, 31-19, over the Rams.

SUPER BOWL XIII

January 21, 1979
Orange Bowl, Miami
Attendance: 79,484

	1	2	3	4	F
Steelers	7	14	0	14	**35**
Cowboys	7	7	3	14	**31**

MVP: Terry Bradshaw (QB), **Steelers** 17 of 30 passing, 318 yards, 4 TDs

Terry Bradshaw's four touchdown passes led the Steelers, who became the first team to win three Super Bowls. The first two scoring tosses went to John Stallworth, and the third, with 26 seconds remaining in the second quarter, was to Rocky Bleier for a 21-14 halftime lead. The Steelers then broke things open with TDs 19 seconds apart midway through the final quarter — Franco Harris rambled 22 yards for a score, and after Dennis Winston recovered a fumble on the ensuing kickoff, Bradshaw fired an 18-yard strike to Lynn Swann.

SUPER BOWL XIV

January 20, 1980
Rose Bowl, Pasadena
Attendance: 103,985

	1	2	3	4	F
Rams	7	6	6	0	**19**
Steelers	3	7	7	14	**31**

MVP: Terry Bradshaw (QB), **Steelers** 14 of 21 passing, 309 yards, 2 TDs

Trailing 13-10 at halftime, the Steelers rallied to win their fourth Super Bowl crown in six years. They briefly moved ahead in the third quarter when Terry Bradshaw hit Lynn Swann on a 47-yard TD pass, but the Rams responded on their next possession with Lawrence McCutcheon throwing a halfback option touchdown to Ron Smith. The Steelers would finally take the lead for good in the fourth quarter on Bradshaw's 73-yard touchdown throw to John Stallworth. After stopping an L.A. threat with a Jack Lambert interception, Pittsburgh sealed the victory on Franco Harris' 1-yard TD run.

SUPER BOWL XV

January 25, 1981
Superdome, New Orleans
Attendance: 76,135

	1	2	3	4	F
Raiders	14	0	10	3	**27**
Eagles	0	3	0	7	**10**

MVP: Jim Plunkett (QB), **Raiders** 13 of 21 passing, 261 yards, 3 TDs

Jim Plunkett passed for three touchdowns, including an 80-yard strike to Kenny King late in the first quarter, as the Raiders became the first Wild Card team to win the Super Bowl. Linebacker Rod Martin set up Oakland's first touchdown with an interception, one of a Super Bowl-record three he had in the game, while King's grab marked the longest play in Super Bowl history at the time. Oakland's Mark van Eeghen led all rushers with 75 yards, while teammate Cliff Branch had five receptions for 67 yards, including two catches that went for touchdowns.

SUPER BOWL XVI

January 24, 1982
Silverdome, Pontiac
Attendance: 81,270

	1	2	3	4	F
49ers	7	13	0	6	**26**
Bengals	0	0	7	14	**21**

MVP: Joe Montana (QB), **49ers** 14 of 22 passing, 157 yards, 1 TD

Ray Wersching kicked a Super Bowl record-tying four field goals and Joe Montana directed a controlled passing attack to lift the 49ers to their first NFL crown. San Francisco owned a 20-0 halftime lead thanks to Montana's 1-yard TD run, Earl Cooper's 11-yard scoring catch, and 22- and 26-yard field goals from Wersching. The Bengals closed the gap on Ken Anderson's 5-yard TD run and Dan Ross' 4-yard scoring grab, but the 49ers kicker padded the lead with two fourth-quarter field goals. Cincinnati outgained San Francisco, 356-275, marking the first time in Super Bowl history that the losing team had more total yards.

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SUPER BOWL XVII

January 30, 1983
Rose Bowl, Pasadena
Attendance: 103,667

	1	2	3	4	F
Dolphins	7	10	0	0	**17**
Redskins	0	10	3	14	**27**

MVP: John Riggins (RB), **Redskins**
38 carries, 166 yards, 1 TD

John Riggins topped 100 rushing yards for the fourth straight playoff game, part of a 276-yard ground effort for Washington, which won its first NFL title since 1942. The Dolphins held a 17-10 halftime lead, but wouldn't score again. Mark Moseley's short field goal pulled Washington within four, and Riggins moved his team ahead when he broke loose for a 43-yard TD run on a fourth-and-1 play early in the fourth quarter. Charlie Brown's 6-yard TD catch with 1:55 left closed out the scoring. The Dolphins managed only 176 total yards of offense, including just 34 after intermission.

SUPER BOWL XVIII

January 22, 1984
Tampa Stadium, Tampa
Attendance: 72,920

	1	2	3	4	F
Redskins	0	3	6	0	**9**
Raiders	7	14	14	3	**38**

MVP: Marcus Allen (RB), **Raiders**
20 carries, 191 yards, 2 TDs

Derrick Jensen's end-zone recovery of a punt he blocked — giving the Raiders a 7-0 lead less than five minutes into the game — put his team on course for a one-sided victory. Two key plays sealed Washington's fate. With just seven seconds left in the first half, Raiders linebacker Jack Squirek intercepted a pass at the Washington 5-yard line that he ran in for a touchdown to give Los Angeles a 21-3 lead. Then, on the final play of the third quarter, game MVP Marcus Allen darted 74 yards for a backbreaking touchdown.

SUPER BOWL XIX

January 20, 1985
Stanford Stadium, Stanford
Attendance: 84,059

	1	2	3	4	F
Dolphins	10	6	0	0	**16**
49ers	7	21	10	0	**38**

MVP: Joe Montana (QB), **49ers**
24 of 35 passing, 331 yards, 3 TDs

The 49ers' offense piled up 537 net yards as Joe Montana got the best of Dan Marino in this battle of future Hall of Fame QBs. Roger Craig became the first player to score three TDs in a Super Bowl game, one of those on an 8-yard TD reception that gave the 49ers a lead they would never relinquish. He added a short touchdown run before halftime and would close out San Francisco's scoring with a 16-yard reception from Montana. Craig finished with 58 yards rushing and caught seven passes for another 77 yards. The 49ers also held a 37:11 to 22:49 time of possession advantage.

SUPER BOWL XX

January 26, 1986
Superdome, New Orleans
Attendance: 73,818

	1	2	3	4	F
Bears	13	10	21	2	**46**
Patriots	3	0	0	7	**10**

MVP: Richard Dent (DE), **Bears**
1.5 sacks, part of defense that allowed 7 rushing yards

In a dominating display from start to finish, the Bears' league-leading defense recorded seven sacks and limited the Patriots to just 7 rushing yards. Chicago yielded an early field goal but then scored the game's next 44 points. Jim McMahon and Matt Suhey had scoring runs and Kevin Butler kicked three field goals to give the Bears a 23-3 halftime lead. After forcing a Patriots punt to start the second half, Chicago marched 96 yards for another TD to put the game out of reach. The Bears' Walter Payton rushed for 61 yards, while Richard Dent became just the fifth defender to be named Super Bowl MVP.

The 49ers' Joe Montana (16) outdueled the Dolphins' Dan Marino in a battle of future Hall of Fame quarterbacks in Super Bowl XIX. Montana threw for 331 yards and three touchdowns in the 38-16 victory and won his second of three Super Bowl MVP awards.

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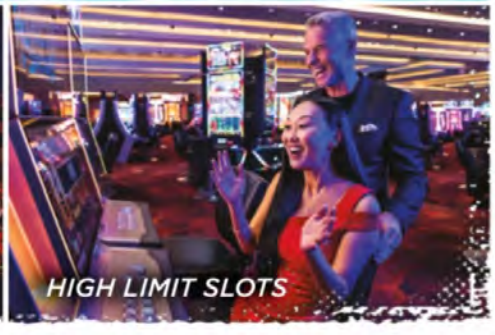
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Doug Williams threw four second-quarter touchdown passes while leading Washington to a 42-10 victory over Denver in Super Bowl XXII.

SUPER BOWL XXI

January 25, 1987
Rose Bowl, Pasadena
Attendance: 101,063

	1	2	3	4	F
Broncos	10	0	0	10	**20**
Giants	7	2	17	13	**39**

MVP: Phil Simms (QB), **Giants**
22 of 25 passing, 268 yards, 3 TDs

Buoyed by a big defensive stand in the second quarter, the Giants captured their first NFL title since 1956. The Broncos, already leading by a 10-7 score, had a first down at the New York 1-yard line, but were stymied on three running plays and then missed a short field-goal attempt. The Giants would take command in the third quarter en route to a 30-point second half — scoring four touchdowns and a field goal on their first five possessions after intermission — and moved in front for good on Mark Bavaro's 13-yard TD reception. Phil Simms deftly managed the game for the victors, setting Super Bowl records for completion percentage (88.0) and passer rating (150.92).

SUPER BOWL XXII

January 31, 1988
Jack Murphy Stadium, San Diego
Attendance: 73,302

	1	2	3	4	F
Redskins	0	35	0	7	**42**
Broncos	10	0	0	0	**10**

MVP: Doug Williams (QB), **Redskins**
18 of 29 passing, 340 yards, 4 TDs

Washington enjoyed a record-setting second quarter on its way to victory. Trailing 10-0, Washington scored touchdowns on five straight possessions — establishing an NFL postseason mark for most points in a quarter (35). QB Doug Williams led the way by passing for four TDs, including 80- and 50-yard bombs to Ricky Sanders, and the five scores required only 18 total plays and 5:47 in possession. Timmy Smith amassed a Super Bowl-record 204 rushing yards (a mark that still stands), Barry Wilburn had two of Washington's three interceptions, and Alvin Walton recorded two of the team's five sacks.

SUPER BOWL XXIII

January 22, 1989
Joe Robbie Stadium, Miami
Attendance: 75,129

	1	2	3	4	F
Bengals	0	3	10	3	**16**
49ers	3	0	3	14	**20**

MVP: Jerry Rice (WR), **49ers**
11 receptions, 215 yards, 1 TD

By scoring on one of the most famous and clutch drives in league history, the 49ers became the first NFC team to win three Super Bowls. Cincinnati had taken a 16-13 lead on Jim Breech's 40-yard field goal with 3:20 left in the fourth quarter, but Joe Montana calmly drove San Francisco 92 yards over 11 plays, capped by his 10-yard touchdown pass to John Taylor with just 34 seconds remaining. It was Taylor's lone catch of the game. Montana completed 23 of 36 passes for 357 yards, helping San Francisco post a 453 to 229 advantage in total yards. The game was the last at the helm for 49ers head coach Bill Walsh.

SUPER BOWL XXIV

January 28, 1990
Superdome, New Orleans
Attendance: 72,919

	1	2	3	4	F
49ers	13	14	14	14	**55**
Broncos	3	0	7	0	**10**

MVP: Joe Montana (QB), **49ers**
22 of 29 passing, 297 yards, 5 TDs

The 49ers coasted to victory while setting a Super Bowl record for points that still stands. They scored touchdowns on four of their six first-half possessions to take a 27-3 lead at intermission, then cemented their advantage with interceptions by Michael Walter and Chet Brooks to end Denver's first two drives of the second half. Joe Montana was named Super Bowl MVP for a then-record third time, with his favorite target being Jerry Rice, who caught seven passes for 148 yards and three touchdowns. The 49ers' dominance extended to first downs (28 to 12), net yards (461 to 167), and time of possession (39:31 to 20:29).

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SUPER BOWL XXV

January 27, 1991
Tampa Stadium, Tampa
Attendance: 73,813

	1	2	3	4	F
Bills	3	9	0	7	**19**
Giants	3	7	7	3	**20**

MVP: Ottis Anderson (RB), **Giants**
102 rushing yards, 1 TD; 5 receptions

Successfully employing a ball-control offense that saw them maintain possession for more than 40 minutes, the Giants edged the high-powered Bills. Fourteen of New York's 73 plays came on its opening drive of the third quarter, which consumed a Super Bowl-record 9:29 and ended with Ottis Anderson's 1-yard touchdown run. A Thurman Thomas TD run put Buffalo back in front, but Matt Bahr gave New York the lead for good with his 21-yard field goal midway through the fourth quarter. Giants QB Jeff Hostetler was efficient in victory, completing 20 of 32 passes for 222 yards, including a 14-yard TD to Stephen Baker in the second quarter.

SUPER BOWL XXVI

January 26, 1992
Metrodome, Minneapolis
Attendance: 63,130

	1	2	3	4	F
Redskins	0	17	14	6	**37**
Bills	0	0	10	14	**24**

MVP: Mark Rypien (QB), **Redskins**
18 of 33 passing, 292 yards, 2 TDs

After Buffalo had shaved 10 points off a 24-0 deficit, Mark Rypien restored order with his 30-yard TD pass to Gary Clark that propelled Washington to its third Super Bowl win in 10 years — all of them under coach Joe Gibbs but each with a different quarterback. Washington held a 17-0 halftime lead and quickly extended it on Gerald Riggs' short scoring run that was set up by a Kurt Gouveia interception. It was one of four pickoffs by the team's defense. Clark finished with seven catches for 114 yards and Art Monk added seven for 113 yards for the victors, who amassed 417 yards of total offense.

SUPER BOWL XXVII

January 31, 1993
Rose Bowl, Pasadena
Attendance: 98,374

	1	2	3	4	F
Bills	7	3	7	0	**17**
Cowboys	14	14	3	21	**52**

MVP: Troy Aikman (QB), **Cowboys**
22 of 30 passing, 273 yards, 4 TDs

Troy Aikman threw four touchdown passes, Emmitt Smith rushed for 108 yards, and the Cowboys' defense forced nine turnovers in this one-sided victory. Two of those turnovers helped the Cowboys take the lead for good late in the opening quarter. First, Dallas safety James Washington intercepted a pass that he returned to the Bills 47, setting up Aikman's 23-yard TD throw to Jay Novacek. On the next play from scrimmage, a sack by the Cowboys' Charles Haley forced a fumble that teammate Jimmie Jones scooped up and ran 2 yards for another score.

SUPER BOWL XXVIII

January 30, 1994
Georgia Dome, Atlanta
Attendance: 72,817

	1	2	3	4	F
Cowboys	6	0	14	10	**30**
Bills	3	10	0	0	**13**

MVP: Emmitt Smith (RB), **Cowboys**
30 carries, 132 yards, 2 TDs

The Cowboys became the first team to open the season 0-2 and go on to win the Super Bowl, and the fifth team to capture back-to-back Super Bowl titles. A big defensive play and Emmitt Smith's two touchdown runs helped Dallas erase a 13-6 halftime deficit. Just 55 seconds after intermission, safety James Washington recovered a fumble and weaved his way 46 yards for a touchdown to tie the game. After the Bills punted on their next possession, Smith took over, carrying seven times for 61 yards on a march that ended with his 15-yard scoring jaunt to put Dallas ahead for good. Washington added a late interception that led to another Smith touchdown run.

The Giants' ground attack, led by game MVP Ottis Anderson, sparked a 20-19 upset of the Bills in Super Bowl XXV.

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The 49ers' Steve Young set the record for TD passes in a Super Bowl game, throwing six in a 49-26 win over the Chargers in Super Bowl XXIX.

SUPER BOWL XXIX

January 29, 1995
Joe Robbie Stadium, Miami
Attendance: 74,107

	1	2	3	4	F
Chargers	7	3	8	8	**26**
49ers	14	14	14	7	**49**

MVP: Steve Young (QB), **49ers**
24 of 36 passing, 325 yards, 6 TDs

Steve Young's Super Bowl-record six touchdown passes lifted the 49ers past the Chargers to become the first team to win five Super Bowls. The QB, who directed an explosive offense that generated seven TDs, 28 first downs, and 455 total yards, wasted little time getting his team on the scoreboard. He fired a 44-yard touchdown throw to Jerry Rice only three plays and 1:24 into the game, and made it 14-0 with a 51-yard pass to Rickey Watters on the 49ers' next possession. Both Rice and Watters scored three times in the win, and the 75 combined points set another Super Bowl record that still stands.

SUPER BOWL XXX

January 28, 1996
Sun Devil Stadium, Tempe
Attendance: 76,347

	1	2	3	4	F
Cowboys	10	3	7	7	**27**
Steelers	0	7	0	10	**17**

MVP: Larry Brown (CB), **Cowboys**
2 interceptions, both leading to Cowboys touchdowns

Cornerback Larry Brown's two interceptions led to 14 second-half points, lifting the Cowboys to their third Super Bowl victory in four seasons and fifth title overall. Dallas scored on each of its first three possessions, taking a 13-0 lead behind Troy Aikman's 3-yard TD pass to Jay Novacek and two Chris Boniol field goals. The Steelers managed to stay close, pulling within 13-7 and then 20-17, but Brown's heroics kept Dallas ahead. Both of his pickoffs set up short scoring runs by Emmitt Smith, the second with just 3:43 remaining in the game.

SUPER BOWL XXXI

January 26, 1997
Superdome, New Orleans
Attendance: 72,301

	1	2	3	4	F
Patriots	14	0	7	0	**21**
Packers	10	17	8	0	**35**

MVP: Desmond Howard (KR-PR), **Packers** 244 return yards, 99-yard kickoff return for TD

The NFC's Super Bowl win streak reached 13 games, thanks to big plays from Brett Favre and Desmond Howard that fueled the Packers. Favre threw for two touchdowns and ran for a third, while Howard's 99-yard kickoff-return TD in the third quarter stemmed New England's momentum. On Green Bay's second play from scrimmage, Favre hit Andre Rison for a 54-yard touchdown, and he later connected with Antonio Freeman on an 81-yard strike. But it wasn't until Howard's return late in the third quarter — on the heels of Curtis Martin's 18-yard rushing TD — that the Packers' lead was safe.

SUPER BOWL XXXII

January 25, 1998
Qualcomm Stadium, San Diego
Attendance: 68,912

	1	2	3	4	F
Packers	7	7	3	7	**24**
Broncos	7	10	7	7	**31**

MVP: Terrell Davis (RB), **Broncos**
30 carries, 157 yards, 3 TDs

Terrell Davis rushed for 157 yards and a Super Bowl-record three touchdowns to lead the Broncos to their first NFL title and snap the NFC's streak of Super Bowl victories at 13. With the game knotted, 24-24, and just 3:27 left in regulation, the Broncos took over at the Packers 49. Davis rushed for 2 yards, and a 15-yard face-mask penalty moved the ball to the Packers 32. Three plays later, Davis' 17-yard run brought the ball to the 1, and after a timeout, he waltzed into the end zone for the go-ahead score. Green Bay drove to the Broncos 31 in the waning seconds, but John Mobley knocked away Brett Favre's fourth-down pass to preserve the victory.

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Kurt Warner was the quarterback for the high-flying Rams offense that became known as the "The Greatest Show on Turf." In Super Bowl XXXIV, his 73-yard touchdown pass to Isaac Bruce snapped a fourth-quarter tie against the Titans.

SUPER BOWL XXXIII

January 31, 1999
Pro Player Stadium, Miami
Attendance: 74,803

	1	2	3	4	F
Broncos	7	10	0	17	**34**
Falcons	3	3	0	13	**19**

MVP: John Elway (QB), **Broncos**
18 of 29 passing, 336 yards, 1 TD

Playing in his final game, John Elway shined while leading the Broncos to their second consecutive Super Bowl victory, the first AFC team to achieve that feat since the Steelers 19 years earlier. Denver took the lead early, with Elway's 41-yard pass to Rod Smith setting up Howard Griffith's short TD run. Elway then fired an 80-yard scoring strike to Smith to put the Broncos ahead 17-3. In the second half, Darrien Gordon dashed Atlanta's comeback hopes with interceptions on consecutive possessions that led to Denver touchdowns, the second of those a 3-yard Elway run making it 31-6.

SUPER BOWL XXXIV

January 30, 2000
Georgia Dome, Atlanta
Attendance: 72,625

	1	2	3	4	F
Rams	3	6	7	7	**23**
Titans	0	0	6	10	**16**

MVP: Kurt Warner (QB), **Rams**
24 of 45 passing, 414 yards, 2 TDs

Mike Jones tackled the Titans' Kevin Dyson at the 1-yard line as time expired, securing the Rams' first Super Bowl title. For coach Dick Vermeil, the win came 19 years after he brought the Eagles to the Super Bowl, marking the longest stretch between Super Bowl appearances by a coach. St. Louis reached the red zone on each of its first six possessions, but could muster just three field goals and one touchdown. The Titans then rallied with two long TD drives and an Al Del Greco field goal to tie the game late in the fourth quarter. It was untied on the next play from scrimmage when Kurt Warner lofted a 73-yard touchdown pass to Isaac Bruce. Tennessee then drove deep into Rams territory, only to come up empty when Jones stopped Dyson shy of the goal line.

SUPER BOWL XXXV

January 28, 2001
Raymond James Stadium, Tampa
Attendance: 71,921

	1	2	3	4	F
Ravens	7	3	14	10	**34**
Giants	0	0	7	0	**7**

MVP: Ray Lewis (LB), **Ravens**
Star of a defense that allowed just 152 total yards

The Ravens' defense led the way by forcing five turnovers, recording four sacks, and not allowing an offensive touchdown as the franchise posted its first Super Bowl victory. There were 21 points scored in a dizzying 36-second span of the third quarter, starting when Baltimore's Duane Starks returned an interception 49 yards for a touchdown and a 17-0 Ravens lead. The Giants' Ron Dixon brought back the ensuing kickoff 97 yards for a score, but Jermaine Lewis matched it with a kickoff-return TD of his own. The Giants managed just one first down on their final four possessions.

SUPER BOWL XXXVI

February 3, 2002
Superdome, New Orleans
Attendance: 72,922

	1	2	3	4	F
Rams	3	0	0	14	**17**
Patriots	0	14	3	3	**20**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), **Patriots**
16 of 27 passing, 145 yards, 1 TD

Adam Vinatieri's 48-yard field goal proved the difference as the Patriots prevailed in the first Super Bowl in which the winning points were scored on the final play. Underdog New England had built a 17-3 lead, but the Rams tied things up with two fourth-quarter touchdowns — the second with just 1:30 to go — before Patriots QB Tom Brady positioned his team for the game-winning kick. He completed five passes on the final drive, three of those to J.R. Redmond and another a 23-yarder to Troy Brown that brought the ball into St. Louis territory.

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SUPER BOWL XXXVII

January 26, 2003
Qualcomm Stadium, San Diego
Attendance: 67,603

	1	2	3	4	F
Raiders	3	0	6	12	**21**
Buccaneers	3	17	14	14	**48**

MVP: Dexter Jackson (S), **Buccaneers**
2 of team's 5 interceptions

Tampa Bay intercepted five Raiders passes, three that were returned for touchdowns, on its way to the franchise's first Super Bowl title. After an early field goal, Oakland managed just two first downs on its next nine possessions while the Buccaneers reeled off 34 straight points. Keenan McCardell ignited a decisive sequence, catching TD passes on back-to-back drives that put his team ahead, 27-3. Dwight Smith brought back pickoffs 44 and 50 yards for scores, and Derrick Brooks had a 44-yard interception-return TD after the Raiders narrowed the gap to 34-21 in the fourth quarter. The Bucs' defense limited Oakland to just 269 total yards — 19 on the ground — and Tampa Bay enjoyed a 37:14 to 22:46 advantage in time of possession.

SUPER BOWL XXXVIII

February 1, 2004
Reliant Stadium, Houston
Attendance: 71,525

	1	2	3	4	F
Panthers	0	10	0	19	**29**
Patriots	0	14	0	18	**32**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), **Patriots**
32 of 48 passing, 354 yards, 3 TDs

Another Super Bowl classic went the Patriots' way when Adam Vinatieri's 41-yard field goal with four seconds to play lifted New England to its second championship in three years. While it took a Super Bowl-record 26 minutes, 55 seconds for the first points to be scored, the teams eventually combined for 868 total yards — 481 by the Patriots — and had the highest-scoring fourth quarter (37 points) in Super Bowl history. Carolina briefly moved in front on an 85-yard Muhsin Muhammad TD reception and later tied the game on Ricky Proehl's 12-yard scoring catch with 1:08 remaining. But Tom Brady answered by driving the Patriots into field goal range, aided by Deion Branch's clutch 17-yard reception.

SUPER BOWL XXXIX

February 6, 2005
Alltel Stadium, Jacksonville
Attendance: 78,125

	1	2	3	4	F
Patriots	0	7	7	10	**24**
Eagles	0	7	7	7	**21**

MVP: Deion Branch (WR), **Patriots**
11 receptions, 133 yards

Behind a defense that forced four turnovers — including two fourth-quarter interceptions — the Patriots joined the Cowboys as the only teams to win three Super Bowls in a span of four seasons. New England took the lead for good early in the fourth quarter on a drive sparked by Kevin Faulk, who caught screen passes of 13 and 14 yards and added a 12-yard run. Corey Dillon capped the possession with his 2-yard touchdown run, and after Adam Vinatieri's 22-yard field goal made it 24-14, Tedy Bruschi and Rodney Harrison stepped up with interceptions that sealed the outcome.

SUPER BOWL XL

February 5, 2006
Ford Field, Detroit
Attendance: 68,206

	1	2	3	4	F
Seahawks	3	0	7	0	**10**
Steelers	0	7	7	7	**21**

MVP: Hines Ward (WR), **Steelers**
5 receptions, 123 yards, 1 TD

The Steelers finally earned their "one for the thumb," becoming the first AFC team to win five Super Bowls. Holding a tenuous 14-10 fourth-quarter lead, the game's key sequence came when cornerback Ike Taylor picked off a pass to stop a Seahawks threat. Pittsburgh quickly cashed in when Antwaan Randle El, a quarterback in college, took a handoff, sprinted right, then stopped and fired a 43-yard strike to Hines Ward for the first Super Bowl TD pass thrown by a wide receiver. In the third quarter, the Steelers' Willie Parker burst free for a Super Bowl-record 75-yard touchdown run.

Deion Branch earned MVP honors at Super Bowl XXXIX after catching 11 passes in the Patriots' 24-21 win over the Eagles.

As he did time and again through his career, Tom Brady stepped up in the final moments of Super Bowl XXXVIII to lead a game-winning drive. Brady won seven Super Bowls — six with the Patriots and one with the Buccaneers — and was the game's MVP on five occasions.

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LEFT: Colts head coach Tony Dungy gets a Gatorade bath after his team's 29-17 victory over the Bears in Super Bowl XLI. The title was the franchise's first since moving to Indianapolis. ABOVE: Drew Brees (9) and the Saints prevented Dwight Freeney (93) and the Colts from adding to their Lombardi Trophy collection, prevailing, 31-17, in Super Bowl XLIV. Brees threw for 288 yards and a pair of touchdowns en route to being named the game's MVP.

SUPER BOWL XLI

February 4, 2007
Dolphin Stadium, Miami Gardens
Attendance: 74,512

	1	2	3	4	F
Colts	6	10	6	7	**29**
Bears	14	0	3	0	**17**

MVP: Peyton Manning (QB), **Colts**
25 of 38 passing, 247 yards, 1 TD

A wet and wild night of Super Bowl firsts brought Tony Dungy, Peyton Manning, and the Colts to the top of the NFL. Dungy became the first Black head coach to win the Super Bowl while directing the franchise to its first crown since relocating to Indianapolis in 1984. It was also the first Super Bowl title for Manning, whose career saw him set league marks for completions, passing yards, and passing TDs. The game also marked the first time the opening kickoff was run back for a touchdown, accomplished when the Bears' Devin Hester sped 92 yards to give his team the early lead.

SUPER BOWL XLII

February 3, 2008
University of Phoenix Stadium, Glendale
Attendance: 71,101

	1	2	3	4	F
Giants	3	0	0	14	**17**
Patriots	0	7	0	7	**14**

MVP: Eli Manning (QB), **Giants**
19 of 34 passing, 255 yards, 2 TDs

The Giants became the first NFC Wild Card team to win the Super Bowl, an achievement made possible by a relentless defense and David Tyree's brilliant 32-yard catch that set up the go-ahead touchdown. Plaxico Burress capped the winning drive with his 13-yard TD grab with 35 seconds to play, shocking a Patriots squad that entered the game 18-0 and had taken the lead just minutes earlier on Randy Moss' 6-yard touchdown reception. Michael Strahan, playing his final game, keyed a defense that produced five sacks, while the Giants' approach on offense included an opening drive that lasted a Super Bowl-record 9 minutes, 59 seconds.

SUPER BOWL XLIII

February 1, 2009
Raymond James Stadium, Tampa
Attendance: 70,774

	1	2	3	4	F
Steelers	3	14	3	7	**27**
Cardinals	0	7	0	16	**23**

MVP: Santonio Holmes (WR), **Steelers**
9 receptions, 131 yards, 1 TD

In a game highlighted by clutch plays, the Steelers saved the biggest for last. The Cardinals nearly pulled off what would have been an historic comeback, scoring 16 points in a frenzied fourth quarter and taking the lead on Larry Fitzgerald's 64-yard touchdown catch with 2:37 to play. Pittsburgh answered with a 78-yard drive, winning the game on Ben Roethlisberger's 6-yard scoring pass to Santonio Holmes. The game also saw the Steelers' James Harrison return an interception 100 yards for a touchdown on the final play before halftime.

SUPER BOWL XLIV

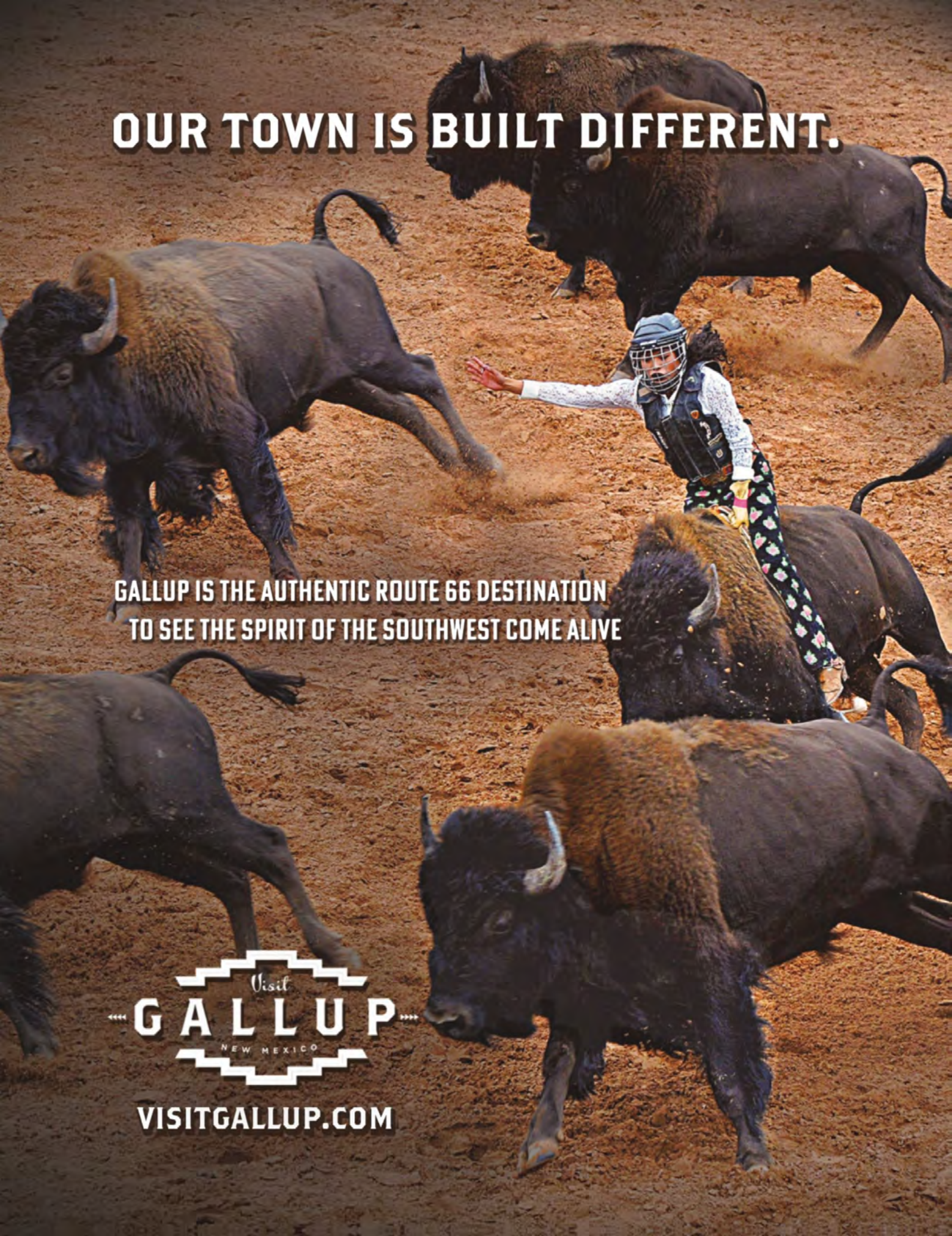
February 7, 2010
Sun Life Stadium, Miami Gardens
Attendance: 74,059

	1	2	3	4	F
Saints	0	6	10	15	**31**
Colts	10	0	7	0	**17**

MVP: Drew Brees (QB), **Saints**
32 of 39 passing, 288 yards, 2 TDs

Lifting the spirits of a community recovering from Hurricane Katrina, the Saints capped a memorable season by edging the Colts for their first Super Bowl title. They did it with a daring play call to start the second half — an onside kick that was recovered by Chris Reis and set up a six-play drive that Drew Brees finished with a 16-yard TD pass to Pierre Thomas. Jeremy Shockey's fourth-quarter scoring grab moved New Orleans in front to stay, and Tracy Porter put the game away with his 74-yard interception-return touchdown with 3:12 remaining.

DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP IMAGES; JULIE JACOBSON/AP IMAGES (Drew Brees)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SUPER BOWL XLV

February 6, 2011
Cowboys Stadium, Arlington
Attendance: 91,060

	1	2	3	4	F
Steelers	0	10	7	8	**25**
Packers	14	7	0	10	**31**

MVP: Aaron Rodgers (QB), **Packers**
24 of 39 passing, 304 yards, 3 TDs

Aaron Rodgers threw three TD passes and Nick Collins returned an interception for another score, sparking the Packers to their fourth Super Bowl title. The Steelers had trailed, 21-3, but tallied two touchdowns to get close and were on the move again early in the fourth quarter. That's when Green Bay linebacker Clay Matthews stripped the ball from running back Rashard Mendenhall at the Packers 33 and teammate Desmond Bishop recovered. Rodgers then marched Green Bay to a quick TD that extended his team's lead to 28-17.

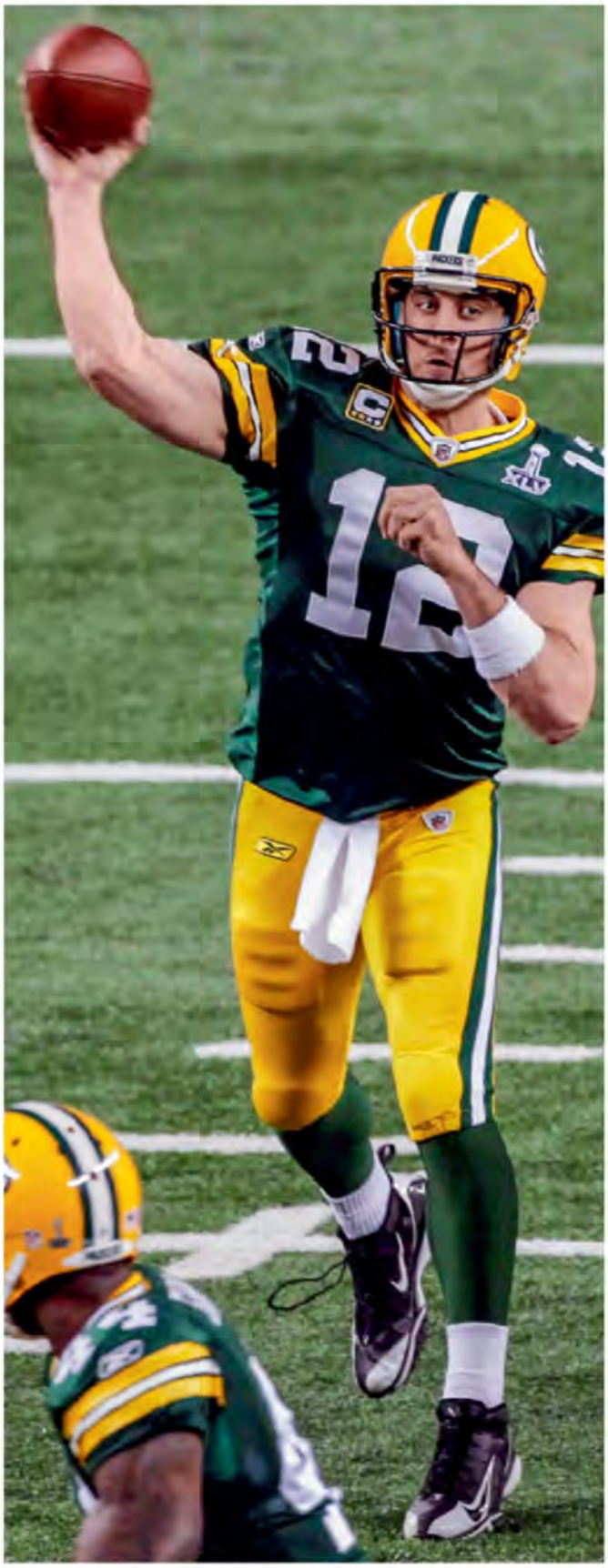
SUPER BOWL XLVI

February 5, 2012
Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis
Attendance: 68,658

	1	2	3	4	F
Giants	9	0	6	6	**21**
Patriots	0	10	7	0	**17**

MVP: Eli Manning (QB), **Giants**
30 of 40 passing, 296 yards, 1 TD

In the first Super Bowl to feature two starting quarterbacks who previously won the big game's MVP Award, Eli Manning and the Giants edged Tom Brady and the Patriots, scoring a late TD for the victory. Manning set a record by opening a Super Bowl with nine consecutive completions; Brady later put together a run of 16 completions in a row, breaking another Super Bowl mark. But with time counting down, Manning directed a nine-play, 88-yard drive that moved New York ahead to stay, capped when Ahmad Bradshaw ran for the winning touchdown with just under a minute to play.



Aaron Rodgers delivered a fourth Super Bowl championship to Green Bay, throwing for 304 yards and three touchdowns in the Packers' 31-25 victory over the Steelers in Super Bowl XLV.

SUPER BOWL XLVII

February 3, 2013
Mercedes-Benz Superdome, New Orleans
Attendance: 71,024

	1	2	3	4	F
Ravens	7	14	7	6	**34**
49ers	3	3	17	8	**31**

MVP: Joe Flacco (QB), **Ravens**
22 of 33 passing, 287 yards, 3 TDs

The Ravens built a big lead and then held on to hand the 49ers their first Super Bowl loss in six appearances. Joe Flacco threw three first-half TDs — capping a stellar 11-touchdown, zero-interception postseason — and Jacoby Jones opened the third quarter with a Super Bowl-record 108-yard kickoff-return touchdown that put Baltimore ahead, 28-6. The 49ers, however, would rally, scoring three second-half TDs and reaching the Ravens 5-yard line before being stopped on downs with under two minutes to play. Baltimore linebacker Ray Lewis added his name to the list of legends whose final game was a Super Bowl victory.

SUPER BOWL XLVIII

February 2, 2014
MetLife Stadium, East Rutherford
Attendance: 82,529

	1	2	3	4	F
Seahawks	8	14	14	7	**43**
Broncos	0	0	8	0	**8**

MVP: Malcolm Smith (LB), **Seahawks**
9 tackles, 69-yard interception-return TD

In what was expected to be the first cold-weather Super Bowl — but instead kicked off in pleasant 49-degree conditions at MetLife Stadium — Seattle cruised past the Broncos. The game featured the quickest points to open a Super Bowl; the Seahawks scored on a safety just 12 seconds into the contest. More big plays followed. Seattle LB Malcolm Smith, the first defender in 11 years to be named the game's MVP, broke things open by bringing back a second-quarter interception 69 yards for a TD, and Percy Harvin returned the second-half kickoff 87 yards for another Seattle touchdown, making the score 29-0.

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SUPER BOWL XLIX

February 1, 2015
University of Phoenix Stadium, Glendale
Attendance: 70,288

	1	2	3	4	F
Patriots	0	14	0	14	**28**
Seahawks	0	14	10	0	**24**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), **Patriots**
37 of 50 passing, 328 yards, 4 TDs

Tom Brady threw four touchdown passes, including the go-ahead score to Julian Edelman with 2:02 remaining, and Malcolm Butler intercepted a pass at the goal line with 20 seconds left to preserve the Patriots' fourth Super Bowl win. Brady's third TD throw was his 12th in the Super Bowl, breaking Joe Montana's career record. Still, Seattle nearly pulled off an improbable victory, moving deep into New England territory on Jermaine Kearse's acrobatic 33-yard catch, before Butler came up big two plays later, stepping in front of a pass for the game-saving interception. The Patriots became the first team to win the Super Bowl after trailing by double figures in the fourth quarter.

SUPER BOWL 50

February 7, 2016
Levi's Stadium, Santa Clara
Attendance: 71,088

	1	2	3	4	F
Panthers	0	7	0	3	**10**
Broncos	10	3	3	8	**24**

MVP: Von Miller (LB), **Broncos**
6 tackles, 2.5 sacks, 2 forced fumbles

Defense carried the day for the Broncos, who won their third Super Bowl title by flustering a Panthers offense that had scored an NFL-best 500 points during the regular season. Denver recorded seven sacks — equaling the Super Bowl record by a team — and linebacker Von Miller forced a pair of fumbles that led to the team's two TDs. The first was scooped up by teammate Malik Jackson in the end zone for a 10-0 lead; the second set up C.J. Anderson's short scoring run. T.J. Ward did his part, too, with seven tackles and one pass defensed. The victory made Peyton Manning the first starting QB to win Super Bowls with two different franchises.

SUPER BOWL LI

February 5, 2017
NRG Stadium, Houston
Attendance: 70,807

	1	2	3	4	OT	F
Patriots	0	3	6	19	6	**34**
Falcons	0	21	7	0	0	**28**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), **Patriots**
43 of 62 passing, 466 yards, 2 TDs

New England staged the biggest comeback in Super Bowl history, rallying from a 25-point deficit late in the third quarter to prevail in overtime for the franchise's fifth championship. It would have been hard to imagine such an outcome after Matt Ryan's 6-yard touchdown pass to Tevin Coleman gave Atlanta a 28-3 lead, but Patriots QB Tom Brady — who became the first four-time Super Bowl MVP — made it happen. He threw TD passes to James White and Danny Amendola, Stephen Gostkowski kicked a 33-yard field goal, and a White touchdown run and a two-point conversion then tied it to cap a frantic final 17 minutes of regulation. White won the game with a 2-yard TD run on the first possession of overtime.

SUPER BOWL LII

February 4, 2018
U.S. Bank Stadium, Minneapolis
Attendance: 67,612

	1	2	3	4	F
Eagles	9	13	7	12	**41**
Patriots	3	9	14	7	**33**

MVP: Nick Foles (QB), **Eagles**
28 of 43 passing, 373 yards, 3 TDs; 1 TD reception

Zach Ertz's touchdown catch with 2:21 remaining put the Eagles ahead, but it still took a big defensive play by Brandon Graham and Derek Barnett to preserve the franchise's first Super Bowl victory. Graham strip-sacked QB Tom Brady on the Patriots' next possession and Barnett recovered the loose ball. The game featured 1,151 total yards, the most ever in an NFL game, and Brady threw for a Super Bowl-record 505 yards. MVP Nick Foles became the first player to both throw and catch a TD pass in the Super Bowl, with his 1-yard scoring grab on a fourth-down play just before halftime giving Philadelphia a 22-12 lead.

Nick Foles lifts the Lombardi Trophy after guiding the Eagles to a thrilling 41-33 victory over the Patriots in Super Bowl LII. Foles threw for three TDs and caught another on a play that has become known as the "Philly Special."

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Julian Edelman (11) looks for extra yardage after making one of his 10 receptions during the Patriots' 13-3 win over the Rams in Super Bowl LIII.

SUPER BOWL LIII

February 3, 2019
Mercedes-Benz Stadium, Atlanta
Attendance: 70,081

	1	2	3	4	F
Patriots	0	3	0	10	**13**
Rams	0	0	3	0	**3**

MVP: Julian Edelman (WR), **Patriots**
10 receptions, 141 yards

On the heels of the highest-scoring season in NFL history, the Patriots and the Rams tangled in the lowest-scoring Super Bowl ever seen. New England prevailed to capture its sixth Super Bowl crown — all since the 2001 season — to tie the Steelers for the all-time record. Sony Michel accounted for the game's lone touchdown, a 2-yard run midway through the fourth quarter that snapped a 3-3 tie and came one play after QB Tom Brady lofted a perfect pass to Rob Gronkowski for a 29-yard gain. Stephen Gostkowski then added a 41-yard field goal with 1:12 remaining to provide New England with a late cushion. In between those two scores, the Rams marched to the Patriots 27-yard line, but their threat ended when Jared Goff's pass deep down the right side was picked off by Stephon Gilmore.

SUPER BOWL LIV

February 2, 2020
Hard Rock Stadium, Miami Gardens
Attendance: 62,417

	1	2	3	4	F
49ers	3	7	10	0	**20**
Chiefs	7	3	0	21	**31**

MVP: Patrick Mahomes (QB), **Chiefs** 26 of 42 passing, 286 yards, 2 TDs; 29 yards rushing, 1 TD

Kansas City erupted for three TDs in a span of 5:01 late in the fourth quarter to overtake the 49ers and win the franchise's first Super Bowl title in a half century. Patrick Mahomes threw touchdown passes to Travis Kelce and Damien Williams — the latter putting the Chiefs ahead — and Williams added a 38-yard scoring run with 1:12 remaining to pad the lead. San Francisco had snapped a halftime tie with a 42-yard Robbie Gould field goal and Raheem Mostert's 1-yard TD run, before Kansas City, facing its third double-digit deficit of the postseason, rallied. Williams rushed for a game-high 104 yards and Tyreek Hill caught nine of Mahomes' 26 completions.

SUPER BOWL LV

February 7, 2021
Raymond James Stadium, Tampa
Attendance: 24,835

	1	2	3	4	F
Chiefs	3	3	3	0	**9**
Buccaneers	7	14	10	0	**31**

MVP: Tom Brady (QB), **Buccaneers**
21 of 29 passing, 201 yards, 3 TDs

Adding another chapter to his legendary career, quarterback Tom Brady directed the Buccaneers to a Super Bowl triumph in his first year with the team. It marked Brady's seventh career title, following six with the Patriots, and the fifth time he won the Rozelle Award as the game's MVP. He threw three first-half touchdown passes, two to longtime teammate Rob Gronkowski and the other to Antonio Brown just six seconds before intermission. Equally impressive was the Tampa Bay defense, which kept the Chiefs, who averaged nearly 30 ppg during the regular season, out of the end zone. Linebacker Devin White paced that effort with 12 tackles and an interception. Played against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, a crowd of nearly 25,000 was in attendance to see the Bucs become the first team to win the Super Bowl in its home stadium.

SUPER BOWL LVI

February 13, 2022
SoFi Stadium, Inglewood
Attendance: 70,048

	1	2	3	4	F
Rams	7	6	3	7	**23**
Bengals	3	7	10	0	**20**

MVP: Cooper Kupp (WR), **Rams**
8 receptions, 92 yards, 2 TDs

Riding a defense that equaled a Super Bowl record with seven sacks — six of those after halftime — the Rams rallied late to upend the Bengals. Cooper Kupp caught four passes on the game-winning drive, including a 1-yard TD with 1:25 remaining that came shortly after he kept L.A.'s hopes alive with a 7-yard run on fourth-and-1. Rams QB Matthew Stafford threw three touchdown passes: two to Kupp and the other a 17-yarder to Odell Beckham Jr. to open the scoring. Cincinnati took a 17-13 lead on Joe Burrow's 75-yard TD pass to Tee Higgins 13 seconds into the third quarter, but its offense struggled after that, converting just 1-of-8 third downs the rest of the way. Aaron Donald and Von Miller each had two sacks for the victors, while at age 36, Sean McVay became the youngest Super Bowl-winning head coach.

CHUCK BURTON/AP IMAGES. Opposite page: MARCIO J. SANCHEZ/AP IMAGES

SUPER BOWL LVII

February 12, 2023
State Farm Stadium, Glendale
Attendance: 67,827

	1	2	3	4	F
Chiefs	7	7	7	17	**38**
Eagles	7	17	3	8	**35**

MVP: Patrick Mahomes (QB), **Chiefs** 21 of 27 passing, 182 yards, 3 TDs; 44 rushing yards

Patrick Mahomes threw a pair of fourth-quarter touchdown passes and added a key 26-yard run that set up Harrison Butker's game-winning field goal as the Chiefs captured their second Super Bowl title in four seasons. Philadelphia built a 24-14 halftime lead behind a pair of Jalen Hurts TD runs and A.J. Brown's 45-yard scoring reception, while Nick Bolton's 36-yard fumble-return touchdown kept Kansas City close. A wild fourth quarter saw the Chiefs take their first lead, 28-27, on Kadarius Toney's 5-yard TD reception with 12:04 to play, and after K.C.'s defense made a big stop, Toney brought back a punt a Super Bowl-record 65 yards to set up another touchdown. The Eagles would knot things up on Hurts' third TD run of the game and subsequent 2-point conversion, before the Chiefs drove the field and prevailed on Butker's 28-yard field goal with 8 seconds remaining.

With the Chiefs' victory over the Eagles a year ago, Patrick Mahomes became the 13th starting quarterback to win multiple Super Bowl championships.

AFL/NFL CHAMPIONS

From 1920-1931, the NFL did not have postseason play, but a first-place tie in 1932 forced a "playoff" — and its success led the league to adopt a championship game format a year later.

NFL CHAMPIONS

1920	**AKRON PROS**
1921	**CHICAGO STALEYS**
1922	**CANTON BULLDOGS**
1923	**CANTON BULLDOGS**
1924	**CLEVELAND BULLDOGS**
1925	**CHICAGO CARDINALS**
1926	**FRANKFORD YELLOW JACKETS**
1927	**NEW YORK GIANTS**
1928	**PROVIDENCE STEAM ROLLER**
1929	**GREEN BAY PACKERS**
1930	**GREEN BAY PACKERS**
1931	**GREEN BAY PACKERS**

1932	PORTSMOUTH SPARTANS	0
	CHICAGO BEARS	**9**
1933	NEW YORK GIANTS	21
	CHICAGO BEARS	**23**
1934	CHICAGO BEARS	13
	NEW YORK GIANTS	**30**
1935	NEW YORK GIANTS	7
	DETROIT LIONS	**26**
1936*	**WASHINGTON REDSKINS**	**21**
	BOSTON BRAVES	6
1937	**WASHINGTON REDSKINS**	**28**
	CHICAGO BEARS	21
1938	GREEN BAY PACKERS	17
	NEW YORK GIANTS	**23**
1939	NEW YORK GIANTS	0
	GREEN BAY PACKERS	**27**
1940	**CHICAGO BEARS**	**73**
	WASHINGTON REDSKINS	0
1941	NEW YORK GIANTS	9
	CHICAGO BEARS	**37**
1942	CHICAGO BEARS	6
	WASHINGTON REDSKINS	**14**
1943	WASHINGTON REDSKINS	21
	CHICAGO BEARS	**41**
1944	**GREEN BAY PACKERS**	**14**
	NEW YORK GIANTS	7
1945	WASHINGTON REDSKINS	14
	CLEVELAND RAMS	**15**
1946	**CHICAGO BEARS**	**24**
	NEW YORK GIANTS	14
1947	PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	21
	CHICAGO CARDINALS	**28**
1948	CHICAGO CARDINALS	0
	PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	**7**
1949	**PHILADELPHIA EAGLES**	**14**
	LOS ANGELES RAMS	0
1950	LOS ANGELES RAMS	28
	CLEVELAND BROWNS	**30**
1951	CLEVELAND BROWNS	17
	LOS ANGELES RAMS	**24**
1952	**DETROIT LIONS**	**17**
	CLEVELAND BROWNS	7
1953	CLEVELAND BROWNS	16
	DETROIT LIONS	**17**
1954	DETROIT LIONS	10
	CLEVELAND BROWNS	**56**
1955	**CLEVELAND BROWNS**	**38**
	LOS ANGELES RAMS	14
1956	CHICAGO BEARS	7
	NEW YORK GIANTS	**47**
1957	CLEVELAND BROWNS	14
	DETROIT LIONS	**59**
1958	**BALTIMORE COLTS**	**23** (OT)
	NEW YORK GIANTS	17
1959	NEW YORK GIANTS	16
	BALTIMORE COLTS	**31**
1960	GREEN BAY PACKERS	13
	PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	**17**
1961	NEW YORK GIANTS	0
	GREEN BAY PACKERS	**37**
1962	**GREEN BAY PACKERS**	**16**
	NEW YORK GIANTS	7
1963	NEW YORK GIANTS	10
	CHICAGO BEARS	**14**
1964	BALTIMORE COLTS	0
	CLEVELAND BROWNS	**27**
1965	CLEVELAND BROWNS	12
	GREEN BAY PACKERS	**23**
1966	**GREEN BAY PACKERS**	**34**
	DALLAS COWBOYS	27
1967	DALLAS COWBOYS	17
	GREEN BAY PACKERS	**21**
1968	**BALTIMORE COLTS**	**34**
	CLEVELAND BROWNS	0
1969	CLEVELAND BROWNS	7
	MINNESOTA VIKINGS	**27**

Bears quarterback Bill Wade (9) gets ready to deliver a pass while teammate Bob Wetoska (63) keeps Giants defenders at bay during the 1963 NFL Championship Game at Chicago's Wrigley Field. Wade ran for a pair of touchdowns in leading the Bears to a 14-10 victory, the franchise's first league title in 17 seasons.

The AFL began play in 1960, and from 1966-1969 (before the merger), the two leagues held separate title games prior to the Super Bowl.

AFL CHAMPIONS

1960	LOS ANGELES CHARGERS	16
	HOUSTON OILERS	**24**
1961	**HOUSTON OILERS**	**10**
	SAN DIEGO CHARGERS	3
1962	**DALLAS TEXANS**	**20** (OT)
	HOUSTON OILERS	17
1963	BOSTON PATRIOTS	10
	SAN DIEGO CHARGERS	**51**
1964	SAN DIEGO CHARGERS	7
	BUFFALO BILLS	**20**
1965	**BUFFALO BILLS**	**23**
	SAN DIEGO CHARGERS	0
1966	**KANSAS CITY CHIEFS**	**31**
	BUFFALO BILLS	7
1967	HOUSTON OILERS	7
	OAKLAND RAIDERS	**40**
1968	OAKLAND RAIDERS	23
	NEW YORK JETS	**27**
1969	**KANSAS CITY CHIEFS**	**17**
	OAKLAND RAIDERS	7

*Held at the Polo Grounds (New York, N.Y.)

BETTMAN/GETTY IMAGES

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Remembering the First Lady of the Super Bowl

NORMA HUNT NOT ONLY HELPED GIVE THE GAME ITS NAME, SHE BECAME ONE OF ITS MOST DEVOTED FANS.

BY LAMAR JR., SHARRON, CLARK, AND DAN HUNT

This is our first Super Bowl without our mother, Norma Hunt. In fact, since its inception in 1967, Mom has never missed the big game. The truth is this game probably wouldn't even be called the Super Bowl without Norma.

In Christmas 1965, Mom got each of her children a Wham-O "super ball."

A few months later, before the 1966 football season, our father, Lamar Hunt, sat in a meeting with the leaders of the National Football League and the American Football League. They were hammering out the details of the merger that would create the NFL as we know it, and they needed to come up with a name for the newly created championship game.

"The Super Bowl," Dad proposed. He later said it was his love of college football — and the pesky rubber balls bouncing around his house — that inspired the name.

It took a few years for the name to catch on, but it took no time at all for our parents to become staples at the game. The first matchup featured their Kansas City Chiefs and the NFL's Green Bay Packers. After watching other AFL teams compete in the two subsequent years, our parents were elated when the Chiefs returned to Super Bowl IV in 1970. And this time, they went home champions.

Over the next 35 years, Mom and Dad always traveled to the game together. It became one of the firm, immovable objects on the family calendar: Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the Super Bowl.

They traveled to Miami, to New Orleans, to Pasadena, and seemingly everywhere in between. At some point, the fun trip turned into a historic feat: Norma Hunt had become the only woman to attend every single Super Bowl.

In 2006, as our dad's health declined, he asked us to make him a promise: "Make sure that Mom keeps her Super Bowl streak alive," he said.

And she did. Just a few months after Dad's passing, Mom walked out to midfield for the ceremonial coin toss at Super Bowl XLI. Not long after that game, she quipped, "It sure would be nice if the Chiefs could get back to the Super Bowl."

Well, after the 2019 season, 50 years since the team had made its last Super Bowl appearance, we had an opportunity to get there. A few decades prior, the NFL honored our father by placing his name on the AFC Championship Trophy, but the Chiefs had yet to earn the right to hoist it.

That all changed one night at Arrowhead Stadium. After a victory over the Titans, the four of us joined our mother on the podium to receive the Lamar Hunt Trophy for the first time in franchise history. Before anyone lifted it, the first thing we did was hand the trophy to our mother. She kissed it. Her Chiefs were going back to the Super Bowl. And, of course, she wouldn't miss it for the world.

Two weeks later, following our comeback win over the 49ers, Mom was hoisting the Lombardi Trophy on a stage in Miami.

In the years that followed, our mother's health began to decline. Last year, as Super Bowl LVII neared, Mom wasn't sure if she would be able to make it. But then the Chiefs once again earned their way to the title game.

In the week leading up to the game, Mom began to realize how much her streak meant to everyone. Patrick Mahomes, Travis Kelce, and Chris Jones recorded videos encouraging her to make the trip to Arizona. And, finally, the day before the game, Mom made her decision: "I'll be there."

It was truly a blessing, and a beautiful ending to her 57-year streak. Mom watched firsthand an impressive comeback on the world's biggest stage. She saw a number of friends who visited our booth, some for the final time. And for her last football game, the Kansas City Chiefs lifted the Lombardi Trophy for the third time in franchise history.

So, with Super Bowl LVIII at hand, we are thinking of her and remembering all her contributions to the game.

In football, as in life, Mom went out a champion.

The widow of the late Lamar Hunt and a minority owner of the Kansas City Chiefs, Norma Hunt passed away June 4, 2023, at the age of 85.

DAVID ELDUT/GETTY IMAGES

WILD STORIES

ATTITUDE AND ADJUSTMENTS HAVE PROPELLED SEVERAL TEAMS FROM THE EDGE OF CONTENTION TO THE TOP OF THE FOOTBALL WORLD.

BY D. ORLANDO LEDBETTER

MARK J. TERRILL/AP IMAGES

Pittsburgh's Willie Parker heads to the end zone on a 75-yard touchdown run in Super Bowl XL. The 2005 Steelers became the first team to win three road playoff games on their way to capturing the Super Bowl.

While any path to a Super Bowl title is difficult, not all journeys are created equal.

That statement is especially true for the non-division winners that must traverse through Wild Card weekend. For them, it literally becomes a "road to glory," one usually involving three away games, playing rested teams, and overcoming hostile environments.

Since the advent of the Wild Card round in 1978, seven teams have taken that extra step on their way to winning it all, proving that health, grit, and playing your best football at the right time are more important than what happened in Week fill-in-the-blank or the seeding next to your name.

As six-time Super Bowl champion head coach Bill Belichick is fond of saying, "To live in the past is to die in the present."

The present didn't look too promising midway through the Baltimore Ravens' 2000 season.

They were a lackluster 5-3, had gone five straight games without an offensive touchdown, and were on the brink of falling out of playoff contention. That's when head coach Brian Billick made the decision to bench starting quarterback Tony Banks in favor of veteran Trent Dilfer. Talk about a game-changer. Baltimore dropped one more game, but then exploded on a seven-game winning streak to end the regular season and clinch a Wild Card berth.

"That was a real special team," says Mike Smith, a defensive assistant on that Ravens staff who later became head coach of the Atlanta Falcons. "We had some real difficult circumstances that we were dealing with.

"Our journey was that we had that tough stretch offensively, but we were able to overcome that. That had a lot to do with the way that the team handled it. Not just the coaching staff, but the players.

"We were fortunate to have guys especially on the defensive side of the ball like a young Ray Lewis," Smith notes. "We had Tony Siragusa and Rod Woodson. Those were the leaders of the team, and they kind of took it upon themselves. Our thought process was, 'Just kick a field goal and we've got a chance to win.'"

Driven by four future Pro Football Hall of Famers — left tackle Jonathan Ogden, tight end Shannon Sharpe, linebacker Lewis, and safety Woodson — the Ravens leaned heavily on defense and a strong rushing attack powered by rookie Jamal Lewis and Priest Holmes. The team set a league mark for fewest points allowed in a 16-game season (165), while the Lewis-Holmes duo accounted for 1,952 yards on the ground.

"Our whole thing was getting to the playoffs," Smith says. "Anybody who could get to the playoffs had an opportunity to win it."

Once there, the Ravens' defense turned up the pressure another notch. They held three of their four opponents below 200 total yards and surrendered only one touchdown. Even in their closest game, in the Divisional Playoffs at Tennessee, they won in typical Baltimore style. They broke a 10-10 fourth-quarter tie with two non-offensive TDs: Anthony Mitchell's 90-yard return of a blocked field goal and Lewis' 50-yard interception return.

By the time the Ravens arrived at Super Bowl XXXV, they were unstoppable. They rocked the Giants, 34-7, by forcing five turnovers (one of them being Duane Starks' 49-yard interception-return touchdown), recording four sacks, and bringing back a kickoff for another score.

"It's overwhelming to look around and see this team, the way we won, the way we worked through adversity," said Dilfer, who gave the Ravens an early lead with a 38-yard scoring strike to Brandon Stokley. "Listen, we're better than we play. Even after winning the world championship, people might not believe me."

When it comes to believing, there may not be a better story than the 1980 Raiders, the first Wild Card team to hoist the Lombardi Trophy. They changed quarterbacks, too, but as the result of injury when starter Dan Pastorini suffered a broken leg in the fifth game of the season.

Tom Flores, in his second year as the head coach, turned things over to veteran Jim Plunkett, whose career had flatlined after a promising start with the New England Patriots. So, how'd the 32-year-old Plunkett fare after stepping in that afternoon against the Kansas City Chiefs? How about five interceptions and five sacks.

Yet Flores had faith in Plunkett, and that decision paid huge dividends. The team rallied around the former Heisman Trophy winner, who guided the Raiders to nine wins over the final 11 games and an 11-5 record. The Raiders were in the tournament.

Rob Burnett (90) celebrates a sack during the Ravens' Super Bowl XXXV win. Baltimore's defense stepped up throughout the 2000 season, helping the team overcome a five-game drought without an offensive TD.

PETER MUHLY/GETTY IMAGES

In the AFC playoffs, they took out the Houston Oilers, Cleveland Browns, and San Diego Chargers to reach Super Bowl XV. There they manhandled the favored Philadelphia Eagles, 27-10, behind Plunkett's 261-yard, three-TD day.

"I know of no other athlete in the history of sport who has made a greater comeback than Jim Plunkett," NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle said afterward.

Plunkett himself wondered if the swashbuckling Raiders could become Super Bowl champions.

"We had a crazy bad-boy reputation and sometimes the guys tried to live up to it, but I never ran around with a team that had such strong camaraderie," he says.

It took 17 seasons, and a touch of irony, before another Wild Card team emerged with the Lombardi Trophy. The Denver Broncos had been to the Super Bowl four times — three of those with John Elway as quarterback and each after winning the AFC West — but never returned home with the title. So wouldn't it figure that their first championship came after being a Wild Card.

The 1997 Broncos were a solid 12-4 but finished a game behind the Chiefs in the division. They then embarked on a playoff run/revenge tour, starting with a victory over a Jacksonville team that had unceremoniously knocked them out of the postseason one year earlier. The following week they beat the Chiefs in Kansas City, and then traveled to Pittsburgh, where they knocked off the four-time Super Bowl champion Steelers in the AFC title game.

Still, the final hurdle in Super Bowl XXXII would be the toughest. History sure wasn't on the Broncos' side. Their opponent, the Green Bay Packers, were going for a Super Bowl repeat, and the NFC had won 13 consecutive Super Bowls. The odds weren't on the Broncos' side, either. The Packers were installed as 11.5-point favorites.

But they overcame all of that behind the rushing of Terrell Davis, who fought through a migraine to gain 157 yards and score a Super Bowl-record three rushing touchdowns, and a defense that shut down Brett Favre when it mattered most.

Elway might not have been at his statistical best — he threw for only 123 yards — but he made key plays (none more famous than the "helicopter run") and even better decisions.

"I can't believe it," he said. "I'm so proud that this team came together. We did it the hard way. For all those Broncos fans that never had this feeling, we finally got it done."

The theme was similar for the 2005 Steelers. A year earlier, they had steamrolled to a 15-1 mark behind rookie quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, only to be eliminated by the Patriots in the AFC title game. The lesson proved key when the team stood at 7-5 and stared at long odds to make the postseason.

Things took a turn during a season-ending four-game winning streak, thanks to a pounding rushing attack led by Jerome Bettis and Willie Parker that averaged 171.5 yards per game and a defense that held three of those opponents under 10 points. The Steelers snuck in as the AFC's No. 6 seed.

They then won three straight road games — the first team to do that in the postseason — to reach Super Bowl XL in Detroit. And with a 21-10 win over the Seattle Seahawks, they finally had their "one for the thumb."

"It's surreal right now," Steelers head coach Bill Cowher said. "It is a rewarding feeling to give that trophy to (team owner) Mr. (Dan) Rooney. That's what he brought me here to do. It really does complete a void that's been there."

When the 2007 playoffs rolled around, the New York Giants weren't given much of a chance to win Super Bowl XLII. Honestly, neither was any other team not named the New England Patriots. It seemed like a formality that the Patriots, who had just secured the first 16-0 record in NFL history, would be taking the Lombardi Trophy back to Foxborough.

The Giants, though, showed little fear at the daunting task they faced. Seeded No. 5 in the NFC, their postseason run included wins at Dallas and Green Bay, teams they lost to in the first two weeks of the regular

Terrell Davis (30) rushed for three touchdowns in the Broncos' win over the Packers in Super Bowl XXXII. Denver came away with its first Super Bowl title after making the 1997 playoffs as a Wild Card.

LOUIS DELUCA/GETTY IMAGES

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JOHN W. MCDONOUGH/GETTY IMAGES

Aaron Rodgers (12) and the Packers took to the road on their way to Super Bowl XLV, winning at Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Chicago before defeating the Steelers for the franchise's most recent Super Bowl crown.

season. At Lambeau Field, with the game-time temperature at minus-1, the Giants battled the Packers, the crowd, and the elements until Lawrence Tynes made a 47-yard field goal for a 23-20 overtime win.

And there was no "happy to be there" attitude for the Giants once they made the Super Bowl. They had gone toe-to-toe with the Patriots in the regular-season finale, leading for much of the game before succumbing, 38-35. There were enough positives to give them the confidence they needed, and it was the Giants that made the big plays, none bigger than David Tyree's helmet catch on the winning touchdown drive, to stun the AFC champions, 17-14.

"This is the greatest feeling in professional sports," said wide receiver Plaxico Burress, whose 13-yard TD reception provided the winning points. "For us to come out and win a world championship tonight — nobody gave us a shot."

The 2010 Packers continued the trend. They finished 10-6 and settled for the No. 6 seed in the NFC, but that didn't stop them from storming through the playoffs. They won at Philadelphia in the Wild Card round, upset the top-seeded Falcons in the Divisional Playoffs, and defeated their division rival Chicago Bears in the NFC Championship Game.

In Super Bowl XLV, Aaron Rodgers threw three touchdown passes and Nick Collins provided a 37-yard interception-return touchdown to fuel the Packers' 31-25 win over the Steelers.

"We've been a team that's overcome adversity all year," said wide receiver Greg Jennings, who caught two of Rodgers' scoring strikes. "Our head captain (Charles Woodson) goes down, emotional in the locker room. Our No. 1 receiver (Donald Driver) goes down, more emotions are going, flying in the locker room. But we find a way to bottle it up and exert it all out here on the field."

Still, there's never quite been a Wild Card success story like the 2020 Tampa Bay Buccaneers. They won three road postseason games before playing the Super Bowl *at home*, the first NFL team to do so.

They had signed six-time Super Bowl champion Tom Brady in free agency in hopes lightning would strike again. But a pair of regular-season losses to NFC South foe New Orleans relegated the Bucs to Wild Card status, and they would need to solve the Saints in the Divisional Playoffs to keep their story going. Brady and company did just that, rallying from a third-quarter deficit — and with Brady scoring the game's final touchdown on a 1-yard run of all things.

One week later, they edged the Packers for the NFC crown, allowing them to make history by hosting Super Bowl LV. The magic and momentum continued as the Bucs pummeled the defending champion Chiefs, 31-9.

"To come here and be Super Bowl champs, it's surreal, man," said tight end Rob Gronkowski, another ex-Patriot who joined Brady in Tampa and caught two TD passes against the Chiefs. "We have so many superstars on this team, but nobody's head was too big. Whoever got the ball got the ball. That's what was so great about being on this team. There was no one who was selfish on this team; no one selfish in the organization."

D. Orlando Ledbetter serves as the Atlanta Falcons beat writer for the **Atlanta Journal-Constitution** *and was named the Georgia Sportswriter of the Year in 2022.*

BEYOND THE BROADCAST

FROM PEN AND PAPER TO THE PROLIFERATION OF SATELLITE RADIO AND SOCIAL MEDIA, COVERING THE SUPER BOWL IS A LOT MORE THAN WHAT WE SEE ON GAMEDAY.

BY BARRY WILNER

A game story, a few quotes, perhaps a sidebar? Not anymore.

These days, media coverage of the Super Bowl runs as deep as a post pattern and as wide as an end run … with numerous audibles along the way. Just look at the schedule Associated Press pro football writer Rob Maaddi tackled last year.

"My Super Bowl LVII stats were 15 stories, so 10,643 words; 27 Radio Row interviews; 16 red carpet interviews; four podcasts; two standups," says the Tampa-based scribe, who began at AP in 2000. "Also, eight peanut butter sandwiches, five pounds lost, 39 hours sleep, and zero parties attended."

Talk about an MVP-worthy performance.

Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes takes questions during a team media session in the days leading up to Super Bowl LVII.

"Super Bowl Week is hectic, filled with news from not only both teams playing in the game but the rest of the league, plus Commissioner Roger Goodell's news conference and much more," he adds. "There's tons of availability with the two participating teams, so there are plenty of storylines to cover."

And there are plenty of storytellers as well. More than 6,000 media members will amass for this year's game, a number that has grown exponentially. For Super Bowl XXXVIII in Houston, the media presence was 4,376. Back at the first Super Bowl in 1967, it was 338.

Credential requests come from across the globe. Super Bowl LVII was televised live in nearly 200 countries and territories, and more than 20 international outlets were at State Farm Stadium, representing nations from Australia to Finland to Saudi Arabia. The game itself was broadcast live in nearly two dozen languages.

Still, that's just a part of the picture. A week or more before Super Bowl Sunday, a massive wave of journalists, TV anchors, radio personalities, podcasters, and influencers descend on the host city, looking not only to provide information but to offer a unique perspective on the game, the teams, the atmosphere, and whatever else crosses their imagination.

Australia's Julian Linden has covered four Super Bowls for the global news agency Reuters.

"The transformation of the Super Bowl in recent years has been nothing short of phenomenal," Linden says. "It's now a truly [worldwide] event with so many fascinating characters and storylines that appeal to vastly different audiences. So, while the television coverage is state of the art, media organizations need to be onsite to chase specific angles that may resonate with their readers and audiences.

"For example, in my home country, the biggest storylines at Super Bowl LVII centered on (Eagles players and Australia natives) Jordan Mailata and Arryn Siposs. They may not have been the biggest talking points in the United States or other countries, but there was huge interest Down Under.

"But what I like best about the Super Bowl is that, unlike a lot of other big events, it's not restrained by tradition. It's always evolving, looking for new ways to engage the rest of the world."

And engage other sports — not simply for entertainment.

While media are reporting on everything from the Super Bowl Experience fan extravaganza to the *NFL Honors* awards show to the growing list of community outreach events, some folks come to learn. Four months before the 2018 World Cup, England soccer manager Gareth Southgate journeyed to Minneapolis for Super Bowl LII. He was treated to one of the most super of Super Bowls when the Eagles outscored the Patriots, 41-33.

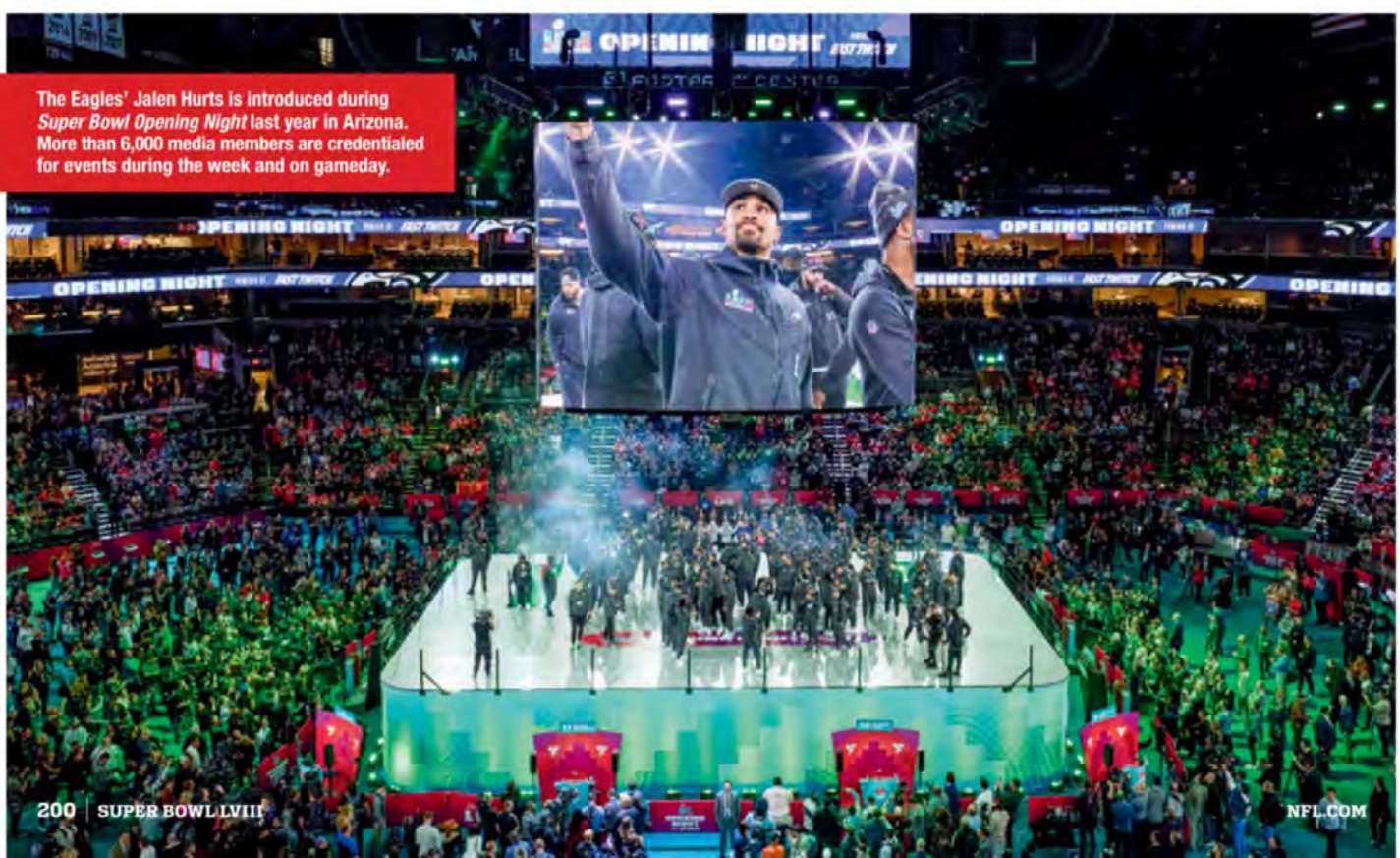
"One of the reasons some of our guys have traveled is to see how the NFL operates, because we don't have to do things the way they've always been done. We can try different things that work," Southgate said then. "I think sometimes around major tournaments the relationship between our guys and the media has been a bit confrontational, and I don't think it has to be that way. So [the Super Bowl] seems very open, a lot more relaxed. There seems to be a lot more respect between people.

"If you keep always doing what you've always done, you get the same results."

One person who always got results was the dean of Super Bowl media coverage, Jerry Green of the *Detroit News*. Green, who passed away last March, covered the first 56 Super Bowls. He not only was a must-read for fans through more than five decades but was a go-to writer among his colleagues, regaling them with stories about Joe Namath, the undefeated Dolphins, the Steel Curtain, and, well, anything related to the NFL's championship contest.

Like many of his fellow journalists, Green had to be flexible in his coverage through the years. Never has that been more necessary than today.

"The impact of social media in journalism has made everything more immediate, not just at the Super Bowl," says Judy Battista of NFL Network and NFL.com. "You are constantly disseminating



The Eagles' Jalen Hurts is introduced during *Super Bowl Opening Night* last year in Arizona. More than 6,000 media members are credentialed for events during the week and on gameday.

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LEFT: Vikings receiver Justin Jefferson was honored as the league's 2023 Offensive Player of the Year at *NFL Honors*. ABOVE: SiriusXM's huge presence along Radio Row includes its *Movin' the Chains* show hosted by Pat Kirwan (left) and Jim Miller (right), who interviewed 49ers QB Brock Purdy at Super Bowl LVII.

information, tweeting, and on Instagram, and taking videos to put on social media. This is a true 24-hour news cycle, and the Super Bowl feeds into it perfectly because so much is going on all the time that week. It's the perfect place for social media.

"And it has forced everybody to be more versatile. If you can shoot something on your phone, professional quality, people love to see that. There is an immediacy to that. You're not just thinking in terms of writing, but taking video. You approach [things] differently."

Similar to Maaddi, Battista has been balancing her duties like Justin Jefferson making a sideline catch.

"I feel there is no typical day; every day is something new," she notes. "You go talk to the teams, maybe make multiple TV appearances, almost certainly write every day. There are a lot of media availabilities for things other than with the teams. It's busy, active ... with all the people there, including the non-football people.

"Undoubtedly you're reporting on the scene, which is always bananas."

That was certainly the case for last year's Rihanna halftime show news conference when, Battista says, "There was a Disney World-type line to get into the ballroom."

That event shifted some of the bedlam away from Radio Row. Where once there might be a dozen radio stations broadcasting from a hotel ballroom, today hundreds of outlets — TV, terrestrial and satellite radio, internet, and social media — are on hand.

"[Radio Row] is a circus and continues to grow bigger and bigger," Maaddi says. "There are so many podcasts and other outlets there. I've had the opportunity to interview Joe Montana, Jerry Rice, Marshall Faulk, Russell Wilson, Eli Manning, JJ Watt, Rob Gronkowski, Dick Butkus, Jerome Bettis, Rod Woodson, and so many more. I'm overwhelmed by requests to be on my show."

Just as impressive is the cast that former NFL executive Pat Kirwan and former quarterback Jim Miller attract to their SiriusXM NFL Radio show *Movin' The Chains*. One of their annual guests is Goodell.

"There's a tremendous amount of value [to such interviews during the week]," Kirwan says. "Roger kind of thinks of me as a guy who loves the NFL, and we're not trying to find a scoop. Guys talking football."

The metamorphosis of Radio Row has been "remarkable," says Steve Cohen, who as a producer at WFAN radio in New York and, later, as SiriusXM senior vice president of sports, was responsible for some of the acute growth. Back in the 1990s, Cohen and WFAN began the annual trek (and trend) of broadcasting live from the Super Bowl site. From there, the row of media outlets expanded to requiring a convention hall to house them.

"Back in the day, we were working two different floors to find talent," Cohen recalls. "Now, we have all these guests booked weeks in advance. We are loaded up with a grid that takes us through every day of the week."

And not only for SiriusXM's NFL channel. The satellite radio service brings entertainment and talk channels to the city of the big game, hosts a concert, and, in essence, creates its own broadcast compound within Radio Row.

"When you talk about the NFL and Super Bowl, it transcends everything else happening in the media," Cohen says. "It creates great content no matter what format you are on. With the different people available at the Super Bowl, it takes in all walks of life."

Kirwan has been there since Radio Row began its explosive expansion, recalling how SXM has gone from one table to "what I call our living room. People park themselves on the sofas and just meet everyone coming through. Celebrity sets, entertainment sets, fantasy football sets. Celebrities come by and proudly like to tell you about their fandom."

Taking in and, naturally, filming all the proceedings is NFL Films. In January 1990, they sent a crew of 16 camera people and assistants to New Orleans on a Thursday, played golf on Friday, and prepped for and covered Super Bowl XXIV on the weekend. Now, there are nearly 300 people onsite for the entire week to handle about 30 projects, including the famed "I'm going to Disney" commercial.

"The amount of projects compared to 2000 is just off the charts," says NFL Films vice president of field operations Mark Morris, "and every year just gets bigger. Last year we shot with 36 cameras. These guys get so excited every time I call them to shoot the Super Bowl."

Who wouldn't?

While with The Associated Press, Barry Wilner covered every Super Bowl from the 1986 through the 2020 seasons. He only got lost on Radio Row once (a year).

COOPER NEILL/GETTY IMAGES (Jefferson); CINDY ORD/GETTY IMAGES (SiriusXM)

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NFL PLAY:60

STAYING ACTIVE AND HEALTHY

NFL PLAY 60 is the league's national youth health and wellness platform. In its 17th season, the initiative empowers millions of youth to get physically active for at least 60 minutes a day and provides support for programs and resources so that kids everywhere can lead a healthy lifestyle.

Alongside the NFL's 32 clubs and partners, the PLAY 60 movement will continue to serve and motivate the next generation of youth to get active and PLAY 60.

Learn more about this initiative at **NFL.com/PLAY60**.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE COACHES

Matt Gallagher (left) and Clive Harding were last year's Don Shula NFL High School Coach of the Year recipients.

Every year, each of the 32 NFL clubs nominates a high school coach for the Don Shula NFL Coach of the Year Award, named after the Pro Football Hall of Famer and winningest coach in league history. The award honors high school football coaches who demonstrate the integrity, achievement, and leadership exemplified by the late Don Shula.

Last season, the NFL selected two recipients: Matt Gallagher of Maine-Endwell High School in Endwell, N.Y. (nominated by the New York Giants) and Clive Harding of Boys and Girls High School in Brooklyn, N.Y. (nominated by the New York Jets). The coaches were honored at the Pro Bowl Games in Las Vegas and attended Super Bowl LVII in Arizona.

This year, the NFL is again recognizing two winners. The 32 nominees are revealed in January, with the two 2023 Coaches of the Year announced live during the Pro Bowl Games on Feb. 4 in Orlando.

Nike, a presenting partner, and the NFL Foundation are awarding $10,000 to the two Don Shula Award winners, while their associated high school football programs receive $15,000. The other 30 finalists each receive a $1,000 award.

The two winners are also being recognized at *NFL Honors* and other Super Bowl Week events leading up to Super Bowl LVIII in Las Vegas.

VERA NIEUWENHUIS/AP IMAGES; DOUG BENC/AP IMAGES

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NFL Foundation – 50 Years of Giving … and Counting

The National Football League Foundation (NFL Foundation) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of those touched by the game of football.

Celebrating 50 years, the NFL Foundation has become one of the leading philanthropic entities in America, contributing to NFL team communities, national and international disaster relief efforts, and societal issues.

This marks 50 years since the launch of a structured and organized community impact framework at the NFL, starting with the founding of NFL Charities in 1973 — the first 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established by a major professional sports league. It represented the member NFL clubs and enabled the NFL to contribute collectively to charitable and worthwhile causes on a national scale.

Fast-forward 25 years when the NFL and NFL Players Association saw it critical to also make a serious investment in those playing our game at the youth level — both on and off the field. Another 501(c)(3) nonprofit was born with the NFL Youth Football Fund, which provided youngsters the opportunity to learn the game of football, get physically fit, and stay involved in productive after-school activities with adult mentors.

In 2012, NFL Charities merged with the NFL Youth Football Fund to unite their philanthropic efforts for exponential impact via the NFL Foundation. Today, the NFL Foundation's commitment to philanthropy builds on the history of NFL Charities and the NFL Youth Football Fund. The NFL Foundation, in conjunction with the NFL's 32 clubs (who are all members of the Foundation), supports the health, safety, and wellness of athletes across all levels, including youth football and the communities that support the game.

The NFL Foundation delivers more than 50 formal grant and recognition programs in support of its mission. For the past half century, it has supported thousands of organizations across the country, ranging from youth and high school football programs in and outside of NFL club markets to national organizations such as the American Heart Association, USA Football, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, and so many more.

The NFL Foundation also provides funding and educational guidance to NFL club foundations and player-related nonprofits to ensure they have the resources and information to bring impact to life in the communities they live and work in while strategically aligning with efforts at the league level. That includes year-round support of on-field cause initiatives such as Crucial Catch, Salute to Service, and Inspire Change; societal issues; evidence-based youth character, mental wellness, social, and emotional learning initiatives; NFL PLAY 60 health and wellness programs; youth and high school football — and the list goes on. It also serves to support charitable fundraising initiatives, including NFL Auction, which allows the NFL Foundation to provide additional financial support to worthy nonprofit organizations and causes throughout the year. And it's because of this enduring and stand-alone 501(c)(3) nonprofit structure that the NFL Foundation has the ability to make such a significant impact and be there for communities, especially in times of need. That includes playing a key role in recovery and relief efforts following major disasters nationwide.

The NFL Foundation is central to the NFL's ongoing efforts to make a positive impact in communities across the country for the past 50 years … and counting. For more information, visit **NFLfoundation.org**.

SUPER BOWL LEGACY GRANT

The NFL, via the NFL Foundation, seeks to improve the Super Bowl host community through its Super Bowl Legacy Grant initiative by awarding a $1.5 million grant — which is matched by the Las Vegas Super Bowl Host Committee and its partners and allocated to local nonprofit organizations.

This year, the NFL Foundation has partnered with Las Vegas Super Bowl Host Committee Charities to help support and promote the everlasting impression Super Bowl LVIII will have in Las Vegas.

The Super Bowl LVIII Legacy Grant Program, funded by the NFL Foundation and the Las Vegas Super Bowl Host Committee's partners, will provide $3 million in grants to local Las Vegas nonprofits with proven track records, resulting in a positive lasting impact in the region long after the Super Bowl has been played.

At least 58 Super Bowl Legacy Grants will be divided across two categories: Pregame Grants, which awarded $1.2 million to immediate, high-impact community initiatives; and Game Day Grants, a competitive grant opportunity, totaling $1.8 million, to local nonprofits. Both categories offer unrestricted funding for projects and programs to permanently improve the lives of Southern Nevadans in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion; education; health and wellness; social justice; and youth and young adults.

For more information about these grants and their impact, to go **lvsuperbowlhc.com/legacy**.

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Engaging Our Communities

The NFL embraces its role in unifying communities and serving as a force for positive change. The league and its teams are committed to implementing consistent and thoughtful responses to societal issues by educating the NFL family, instituting transparent policies, and actively engaging with communities to positively impact society.

The NFL Inspire Change platform includes an ongoing acknowledgment of the ways that systemic racism contributes to barriers to opportunity and equality. Its work, in conjunction with teams, players, and the Players Coalition, encompasses programs and initiatives in four key areas: Education; Economic Advancement; Community-Police Relations; and the Criminal Justice System.

Since 2017, the NFL family has provided $300 million to hundreds of grant partners — local and national — as well as grassroots organizations and social justice nonprofits selected by current and former players.

In addition to the incredible social justice work being led by players, teams recognize community members making an impact on social justice issues with the Inspire Change Changemaker Award. During the season, each club selected a "changemaker," an individual (or group of individuals) making a difference locally with their social justice work, either individually or as part of a nonprofit organization. Each Changemaker received a $10,000 donation from the NFL Foundation, paid to the social justice nonprofit of their choice.

Learn more about the NFL's ongoing social justice work by visiting **NFL.com/inspirechange**.

ADDRESSING SOCIAL ISSUES

In addition, the league focuses its efforts on social issues that include character education, domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking prevention.

All NFL and team employees and personnel—more than 6,000 in all—take part in mandatory education on issues surrounding domestic violence and sexual assault. These sessions have been held annually for the past decade and are among the many ways the NFL remains committed to addressing these critical issues. Additionally, the NFL continues its support for its partners at Raliance and the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

The league also works with the Super Bowl Host Committee annually to identify and provide financial support to local nonprofits that address human trafficking in the host city.

For more information about the NFL's work on social issues, visit **NFL.com/community**.

INSPIRE CHANGE

The NFL's Inspire Change initiative focuses on reducing barriers to opportunity and creating progress in education, economic advancement, community and police relations, and criminal justice reform.

With the return of the Inspire Change Changemaker Award, the NFL is continuing to recognize community members who are working every day to advance social justice.

To learn more about each team's Changemaker and about Inspire Change, visit NFL.com/InspireChange

Highlighting Latino Fan Engagement

Dolphins receiver Braxton Berrios (left) and Dominican star RMAND recorded a song together that shared their passion for music, football, and community.

The NFL continues to expand its platform of customized offerings for the growing fan base of more than 32 million U.S. Latinos. This programming boasts dedicated content channels that reflect the diversity of Latino fans, including top-tier football-first content on Spanish-dominant destination sites of Mundo NFL (YouTube, Instagram, and X) as well as **NFL.com/Mundo**; and multi-platform media partnerships with Telemundo, NBC Universo, ESPN Deportes, FOX Deportes, Amazon Prime Video, Entravision, and TelevisaUnivision — which will air the Super Bowl for the first time.

This season, the league introduced new partnerships, collaborations, and activations to celebrate "la cultura Latina," beginning with its season-long campaign "Por La Cultura" (For the Culture), highlighting Latino players, coaches, and staff, celebrating Latino excellence, and sharing authentic stories of the community.

The initiative features cultural and community-driven activities at the national and local levels, including a new spot titled "Hometown Heroes," which takes a deep dive into the origin stories of Latino NFL standouts Fred Warner of the 49ers, the Jets' Alijah Vera-Tucker, and the Patriots' Christian Gonzalez. The multi-part series highlights the shared truth that all Latino NFL players have hometown heroes who were critical to their journey, their success, and building their love for the game.

The NFL also expanded its partnership with the Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF), creating the NFL Latino Youth Honors — a program dedicated to honoring outstanding Latino tackle and flag football student-athletes. The new program highlights excellence in sports and school while putting a focus on football within this rapidly growing segment of the population.

Fifty-six nominees representing 29 NFL clubs made up the inaugural class of honorees, while eight finalists received grant awards and are being recognized during Super Bowl Week in Las Vegas.

Additionally, the league built on its partnership with NTERTAIN Studios and music label NEON16, led by Latino industry giants Tainy and Lex Borrero. They created a multimedia content series showcasing the diversity and inclusivity of the NFL by bringing together the shared passion for music and football by current NFL Latino players and emerging NEON16 music artists. Through the partnership, RMAND, a rising Dominican star from Netflix's hit reality music competition show *La Firma*, and Dolphins wide receiver Braxton Berrios, who is of Puerto Rican descent, came together to create an original song entitled "NIVEL #0B" while authentically sharing their passion for music, football, and community.

For more information on these and other initiatives, visit **NFL.com/PorLaCultura**.

NFL BUSINESS CONNECT

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

CREATING ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

The NFL Business Connect program kicked off its ninth season in Las Vegas for Super Bowl LVIII, bringing 200 new local diverse companies into the Business Connect family. These talented suppliers join thousands of companies nationwide from 17 past NFL event markets for the Super Bowl, NFL Draft, and Pro Bowl. To date, Business Connect has secured over $55 million in contracts for member companies owned by minority, women, LGBTQ+, persons with disabilities, or veterans.

Every year, the program selects experienced, local, diverse-owned companies to help execute the league's vision of building a world-class Super Bowl experience for its fans. Through Business Connect's professional development workshops and networking events, suppliers learn insider tips from internationally renowned event producers, have face time with the largest procurement organizations in their marketplace, and are prepared to compete for and win contracts related to the Super Bowl.

The Business Connect program is designed to help the NFL address barriers that limit access to opportunities for local diverse business owners. In Las Vegas, business certification proved to be one of those major barriers. Getting certified as a diverse-owned company can be expensive and take months to process, but through a partnership with the Super Bowl Host Committee, Business Connect secured sponsor support and won a grant to cover the cost of certification and provide technical assistance to secure full certification for all member companies.

Business Connect engaged a Las Vegas-based, woman-owned company to get the process started.

"Top-tier supplier diversity programs, like Business Connect, are charged with documenting how effectively their companies engage diverse communities in their procurement process," said Heather Cox, owner of Certify My Company. "Certification is an important tool in that process. Requiring certification ensures your supply chain truly is 51 percent or more owned, operated, and controlled by one or more diverse individuals."

Providing access to certification opens up myriad opportunities to bid on contracts with the numerous large sporting events headed to Las Vegas in the wake of Super Bowl LVIII. Additionally, these suppliers now have access to hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of local, state, and federal contracts previously closed to them.

In total, 67 diverse business owners in Las Vegas were certified through the Super Bowl LVIII Business Connect program.

"At first, we thought the Business Connect program was mostly for contracts, networking, and promotion," said Anna Wendt, president of Convention & Marketing, Inc., whose company was certified through Business Connect. "With diversity certification being a part of this program, it has enabled us to reach another level of opportunity for future business with new clients that we would not have access to without it."

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PROGRESS TO MAKE THE GAME SAFER

The NFL collaborates with medical experts, engineers, and manufacturers to continuously improve the helmets and protective equipment available to players, including position-specific helmets that provide customized protection for position groups and the Guardian Cap.

PLAYER HEALTH & SAFETY

BUILDING A BETTER GAME

The National Football League is committed to improving the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of injuries; enhancing medical protocols; improving how the game is taught and played; and protecting players' overall health, safety, and well-being.

Expanded Guardian Cap Requirement: The 2022 preseason was the first time certain positions across all 32 NFL teams were required to wear the Guardian Cap, a padded helmet shell worn over helmets designed to absorb and reduce the severity of impacts. This resulted in a 52 percent reduction of concussions for those positions during the preseason.

Following this success, the league in 2023 expanded the Guardian Cap requirement to include all offensive and defensive linemen, tight ends, running backs, and linebackers in all contact practices throughout the preseason and regular season. Concussions among position groups wearing the Guardian Cap in preseason practices dropped 46 percent compared to the three-year pre-mandate average, marking the second preseason in a row with a significant decline. The league will continue to explore next steps for the use of the Guardian Cap in 2024 and beyond.

Driving Helmet Innovation: The league continues to drive innovation in helmet safety, providing data and collaborating with medical experts, engineers, and manufacturers to spur the development of better-performing helmets. Position-specific helmets are one of the latest advancements in this technology, providing customized protection for position groups.

This season, a quarterback-specific helmet was available for the first time, specifically designed to reduce the severity of impacts when helmets hit the ground, the cause of half of all quarterback concussions. This follows the introduction in the 2021 season of an offensive and defensive linemen-specific helmet.

Reducing Lower Extremity Injuries in the Preseason: This season, the NFL has continued making progress on one of the highest priorities within its injury reduction efforts, driving down lower extremity injury rates. The league has carefully tracked lower extremity injuries and reduced injury numbers over the past several seasons, particularly with the introduction of the newly mandated approach to ramp-up and acclimation in training camp. During the 2023 preseason, the number of lower extremity strain injuries reached an eight-year low.

Data to Help Keep Players Safe: A critical part of the NFL's efforts to reduce and prevent player injuries is the collection and analysis of on-field data. Innovation in player equipment — including sensors in mouth guards and shoulder pads — provides the league with data from practices and games to advance equipment and training and inform rules changes.

Throughout the preseason and regular season, the league collects data, analyzes it, and ultimately shares findings back with the clubs. Club staff then utilize the data and insights in their work with players, informing their approach to training and injury prevention as well as returning to play following injuries.

Digital Athlete Portals: Beginning this season, all 32 clubs utilized the Digital Athlete team portal, which provides club staff with tools for managing athletic load and injury risk mitigation. In addition to individualized club data, this platform allows club staff to benchmark team trends against previous seasons and a league-wide average. As part of the information shared through the portal, the Digital Athlete's Computer Vision Head Impact System measures the number of head impacts happening during a game. This season, data on head impacts for offensive and defensive linemen was shared weekly with each club, helping coaches and players change behaviors and ultimately reduce impacts.

NFL/AWS Artificial Intelligence Challenges: The NFL and Amazon Web Services (AWS) continue to sponsor innovation challenges as part of the Digital Athlete initiative. In September, the NFL announced the winner of the Contact Detection Challenge aimed at improving

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A critical part of the NFL's efforts to reduce and prevent player injuries is collecting and analyzing on-field data through innovations such as mouth guard and shoulder pad sensors. Data collected by these sensors equip the league with data from practices and games to advance equipment and training and inform rules changes.

University of Pittsburgh medical student Warren Austin worked with the Steelers in 2023 as part of the NFL's Diversity in Sports Medicine Pipeline Initiative.

the league's ability to predict player injuries through artificial intelligence. The algorithm developed by the challenge's winner generated a 31 percent increase in ability to identify on-field contact compared to currently available solutions.

Surfaces: The NFL-NFLPA Joint Surfaces Committee has continued its work toward developing higher standards for all playing surfaces, rigorous field testing, and supporting innovative research to create greater consistency across fields for players. The 2023 season included pilot testing in four stadiums using the Biomechanical Elite Athlete Shoe-Turf Tester (BEAST). It is an innovative machine that measures the interaction between a cleat and a playing surface to provide information on the overall performance of the surface. This year, in addition to the pilot program, the BEAST collected data on all gameday synthetic surfaces across the league.

Smart Heart Sports Coalition: In March 2023, the NFL launched the Smart Heart Sports Coalition, a collaboration among more than 37 professional sports organizations and leading medical and advocacy groups. The Coalition advocates for all 50 states to adopt evidence-based policies that will prevent fatal outcomes from sudden cardiac arrest among high school students.

Diversity in Sports Medicine Pipeline Initiative: As part of the commitment to ensure staff and leaders in the league office and at NFL clubs reflect the racial and gender makeup of America, leaders in NFL Player Health and Safety are working to help diversify the pipeline of doctors interested in pursuing careers in sports medicine. This season, the NFL, in partnership with the National Football League Physicians Society and Professional Football Athletic Trainers Society, expanded the Diversity in Sports Medicine Pipeline Initiative, encouraging medical students from diverse backgrounds to consider careers in sports medicine through the unique opportunity to complete a rotation with an NFL club. The program matched students from 19 medical schools with clubs across the league. As the program grows, the league hopes to expand the initiative to include additional roles in the NFL's player care "Team Behind the Team" — including physician assistants, certified athletic trainers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, nutritionists, and behavioral health clinicians.

Advancing Innovative Medical Research: In June 2023, the NFL-NFLPA Joint Pain Management Committee and NFL Research and Innovation Committee announced more than a half million dollars in research funding to leading independent medical researchers at the American Society of Pain and Neuroscience and Emory University studying the effects of cannabinoids and alternative care on athlete pain management and performance. These funds follow $1 million in research funding awarded to the University of California San Diego and the University of Regina in 2022.

HealthTECH Challenges: The NFL has partnered with Football Research, Inc. and Duke Biomedical Engineering on HealthTECH Challenge I, a crowd-sourced challenge to accelerate innovations that can help make playing surfaces more consistent and safer for players. Winners of $100,000 in project funding will be chosen by a panel once the window for submissions closes in February.

Working with Universities to Gather Data: The NFL continued its partnership with eight Division I research universities to collect data — through novel mouthguard sensors — regarding on-field head impacts to inform injury reduction efforts at the pro and collegiate levels. These sensors collect kinematic data, including impact speed, direction, force, location, and severity. The data collected supplements identical data collection at four NFL clubs and is helping to inform injury reduction strategy, rules changes, and the development of higher-performing equipment.

For the latest news and innovations in the NFL's player health and safety efforts, visit **NFL.com/PlayerHealthAndSafety**.

KARL ROSER/PITTSBURGH STEELERS (Warren Austin)

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Growing the Game

In support of the NFL'S vision to grow the game of football and engage youth, high school, and college football participants, the "Play Football" initiative was launched in 2016. This year-round program celebrates youth, high school, and college football by connecting the football community and promoting the values of the game.

During the 2023 NFL season, Play Football prioritized its focus on utilizing the league calendar to engage with youth, high school, college, and international stakeholders to grow and develop the game of football while ensuring alignment with all 32 clubs, current and former players (Legends), and other partners.

- In collaboration with the local Orlando community and the Las Vegas Raiders, there were 12 collective Play Football events for the Pro Bowl Games (Orlando) and Super Bowl LVIII (Las Vegas) that involved young fans, players, parents, and coaches. In total, over 10,000 stakeholders were engaged.
- Flag football is LA28 bound! For the first time in history, athletes from across the world will compete in flag football on the Olympic level. The NFL and all 32 clubs are working together to create excitement around the sport and continuing efforts to get girls flag football as a sanctioned high school varsity sport. The NFL FLAG Championships will be the largest NFL FLAG tournament — with 242 U.S. teams and 14 international teams totaling 3,300+ participants.
- In the league's continued effort to increase participation and fandom internationally, NFL Football Development partnered with Nike to host an international game featuring Erasmus Hall (Brooklyn, N.Y.) traveling abroad to play the NFL Academy in London. A coaches clinic was held in London along with youth football camps in Germany with 500+ participants.

Learn more about the Play Football initiative by visiting **playfootball.NFL.com** and join the conversation on social media using **#PLAYFOOTBALL**.

VERA NIEUWENHUIS/AP IMAGES (inset)

MADD AND THE NFL TEAM UP FOR THE MOST VALUABLE POSITION

Through the support of partners like the NFL, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) remains the preeminent leader on the front lines addressing impaired driving and underage drinking.

For more than 14 years, MADD and the NFL have engaged players and team staff through meaningful discussions, training, and impactful stories to inspire safe choices that protect themselves and others from the consequences of driving impaired. In addition, MADD has been there to support players, staff, and their communities when their lives have been forever changed because of an impaired driving crash.

Despite years of progress, drunk driving in the United States is on the rise. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 13,384 people died in alcohol-impaired driving traffic deaths in 2021. That's one death every 39 minutes — meaning that during Super Bowl LVIII, five lives will have been cut short. Every life taken is another moment — another reason — to keep fighting to end this national tragedy. If you, or someone you love, has been the victim of impaired driving, support is available at no cost 24 hours a day via the MADD Victim Help Line at **1-877-MADD-HELP**.

MADD and the NFL believe in a world where everyone is safe to live, work, and play — we urge fans to always plan for a safe ride. We invite you to join our movement of advocates and changemakers at **MADD.org** or by following MADD on Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Together, we will not stop until we create a safer future for all and a world in which impairment puts no lives at risk.

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LIVE NATION

Crucial Catch

The NFL, its clubs, players, and the American Cancer Society are committed to the fight against cancer. Crucial Catch addresses the early detection and risk reduction for multiple types of cancer and is committed to addressing the unequal burden of cancer in communities that need it most. Since 2009, this partnership has raised more than $27 million in support of the American Cancer Society and its mission to save lives, celebrate lives, and lead the fight for a world without cancer.

Money raised through the Crucial Catch Initiative aids the American Cancer Society's CHANGE grants, which support community health centers in every NFL team market by increasing access to low- or no-cost cancer screenings in communities that need it most. CHANGE Grants have contributed more than 650,000 cancer screenings in under-resourced communities and impacted over 1.3 million men and women with education, patient navigation, and screening resources.

In addition to the CHANGE grants, this season, to specifically improve breast cancer outcomes, the NFL and the American Cancer Society piloted Links to Care Community Grants in select NFL team markets. Select team healthcare partners and CHANGE grant-funded community health centers collaborated in the Links to Care pilot program to assess challenges within the screening-to-treatment process and develop action plans using evidence-based practices.

Since its inception, Crucial Catch has placed an emphasis on getting screened and catching cancer early when it may be easier to treat. As part of this initiative, the NFL has teamed up with Sleep Number to present The Defender, an online tool for fans to access cancer resources, including finding their local screen center, scheduling a screening reminder, and having cancer-related questions answered through a 24/7 chat and hotline. The Defender presented by Sleep Number also features a quiz that analyzes a user's health information to provide personalized recommendations on how they can reduce their cancer risk.

Throughout October, NFL games featured multi-colored Crucial Catch branding on the field and in stadiums to represent multiple cancers — including breast, colorectal, lung, cervical, prostate, and childhood — all to provide education and raise awareness of how cancer has impacted the lives of people in our communities on many levels.

Visit **NFL.com/CrucialCatch** to find your local cancer screening resources and learn how to reduce your cancer risk.

CARING FOR THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED

The NFL Player Care Foundation (PCF) is an independent foundation created in 2007 through a partnership among NFL owners, the NFL Players Association, the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and the NFL Alumni Association.

PCF is dedicated to helping former NFL players improve their quality of life by addressing a broad spectrum of needs, including financial assistance, medical support, career programs, cardiovascular health, prostate health, and mental health.

PCF is proud to partner with one of the nation's premier medical providers, Tulane University School of Medicine, to conduct its Healthy Body & Mind Screening program. This complimentary national program is available to all NFL Legends and includes cardiovascular, prostate, and mental health screenings. Each year, a screening is held in the Super Bowl host city, including this year in Las Vegas.

Also during Super Bowl Week, PCF is hosting its 6th Annual Super Bowl Career Fair, connecting NFL Legends with more than 30 employers. The PCF Career Fair is a culmination of the greater PCF Career Portal, a year-round job platform connecting 1,800+ NFL Legends with more than 110 national employers by way of monthly information sessions, career fairs, educational certificates, rotational programs, and more.

Since its inception, PCF has provided over $23.3 million to former players in need through financial grants, disaster relief, and mental health resources. Additionally, PCF has conducted more than 6,300 retired player screenings and has identified numerous life-threatening medical issues that were addressed immediately. The Foundation provides these programs and services with diversity, equity, and inclusion as a guiding principle in its work.

To learn more about the NFL Player Care Foundation, visit **NFLplayercare.com** or email **Dana.Lihan@NFL.com**.

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Four Diamond Award

NFL Continues to Strengthen Commitment to Military Community Through Salute to Service

Air National Guard Master Sgt. Erik Roddy and his wife, Amy Holbrook-Roddy, were awarded two tickets to Super Bowl LVIII from the NFL as part of a ticket giveaway alongside the USO during a high school football game in Lebanon, Ohio.

Salute to Service games were held across the NFL during Weeks 9-11, including in Cleveland (top) and in Baltimore, where Ravens linebacker Odafe Oweh took to the field with a U.S. Army soldier. Through these games and with Salute to Service partners and league sponsors, the NFL continues to focus on strengthening the connection between the NFL family and the military community.

SALUTE TO SERVICE represents the NFL's unwavering dedication to honoring, empowering, and connecting with our nation's service members, veterans, and their families.

It is grounded in deep partnerships with the **Bob Woodruff Foundation (BWF)**, **Pat Tillman Foundation (PTF)**, **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)**, **United Service Organizations (USO)**, and **Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)**.

Since 2011, more than $66 million has been raised for these Salute to Service partners. To learn more, visit **NFL.com/Salute**.

SALUTE TO SERVICE AWARD

PRESENTED BY USAA®

The Salute to Service Award presented by USAA annually recognizes NFL players, coaches, personnel, and Legends nominated by NFL clubs who demonstrate an exemplary commitment to honoring and supporting the military community.

Nominees are evaluated based on the positive effect of the individual's efforts on the military community, the type of service conducted, the thoroughness of the program, and the level of commitment. Starting in 2022, NFL fans have helped determine the Salute to Service Award finalists by voting for their favorite team nominee during the month of November.

Team nominations were submitted in October, and the award is presented during Super Bowl Week and recognized at the *NFL Honors* awards show. First presented in 2011, recent recipients include former Chargers linebacker Donnie Edwards (2019); CEO of AMB Sports and Entertainment, the parent company of the Atlanta Falcons, Steve Cannon (2020); former Broncos tight end Andrew Beck (2021); and former Commanders head coach Ron Rivera (2022).

Longtime NFL coach Ron Rivera was the 2022 Salute to Service Award presented by USAA recipient.

A total of $50,000 is donated in the recipient's name: $25,000 from USAA to the aid societies representing all military branches and $25,000 from the NFL to the award recipient's military charity of choice.

USAA, Official NFL Salute to Service Partner, honors and appreciates active duty military, veterans, and their families by creating unique opportunities that bring the military community and the NFL closer together. Examples include USAA's Salute to Service Games, where military guests are invited to watch their local NFL team play while enjoying VIP hospitality; and USAA's Unit Interactions, where NFL players visit local military installations to experience a day in the life of service members and share their appreciation of our nation's military.

To learn more about this year's Salute to Service Award nominees, visit **NFL.com/Salute**.

SUE OGROCKI/AP IMAGES (Cleveland Browns); NICK WASS/AP IMAGES (Oweh); DOUG BENC/AP IMAGES (Rivera)

FIRST

QUARTER
[Weeks 1-4]

CATCHING ON

The Rams' Puka Nacua set NFL records for receptions (39) and receiving yards (501) in a player's first four games.

ZACH BOLINGER/AP IMAGES

NFL STANDINGS THROUGH WEEK 4

AFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Bills	**3-1-0**	**.750**	**139**	**55**
Dolphins	3-1-0	.750	150	119
Patriots	1-3-0	.250	55	97
Jets	1-3-0	.250	62	84

AFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Ravens	**3-1-0**	**.750**	**99**	**58**
Steelers	2-2-0	.500	62	100
Browns	2-2-0	.500	76	60
Bengals	1-3-0	.250	49	94

AFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Colts	**2-2-0**	**.500**	**97**	**99**
Jaguars	2-2-0	.500	80	82
Texans	2-2-0	.500	96	79
Titans	2-2-0	.500	72	70

AFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Chiefs	**3-1-0**	**.750**	**101**	**60**
Chargers	2-2-0	.500	110	104
Raiders	1-3-0	.250	62	101
Broncos	1-3-0	.250	100	150

NFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Eagles	**4-0-0**	**1.000**	**118**	**90**
Cowboys	3-1-0	.750	124	41
Commanders	2-2-0	.500	89	120
Giants	1-3-0	.250	46	122

NFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Lions	**3-1-0**	**.750**	**106**	**83**
Packers	2-2-0	.500	100	96
Vikings	1-3-0	.250	90	95
Bears	0-4-0	.000	75	137

NFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Buccaneers	**3-1-0**	**.750**	**84**	**68**
Falcons	2-2-0	.500	62	77
Saints	2-2-0	.500	62	76
Panthers	0-4-0	.000	67	102

NFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
49ers	**4-0-0**	**1.000**	**125**	**58**
Seahawks	3-1-0	.750	111	91
Rams	2-2-0	.500	98	85
Cardinals	1-3-0	.250	88	102

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Christian McCaffrey was a catalyst in the 49ers' fast start, highlighted by a four-TD effort in a Week 4 win over Arizona.

SCOT TUCKER/AP IMAGES

49ers Set the Gold Standard

TEAM FLASHES EXCELLENCE WHILE EXTENDING REGULAR-SEASON WIN STREAK TO 14 GAMES

Motivated by the still-fresh memory of coming up one game shy of reaching Super Bowl LVII, the San Francisco 49ers appeared primed to take that next step. Dominance on both sides of the ball propelled the 49ers to a 4-0 start, leaving them and the squad that stood in their way in 2022 — the Philadelphia Eagles — as the NFL's last unbeaten teams.

A season-opening 30-7 win at Pittsburgh looked more like a mid-season masterpiece. Quarterback Brock Purdy fired a pair of touchdown passes to Brandon Aiyuk, Christian McCaffrey rushed for 152 yards, and the 49ers' defense stifled the Steelers, not allowing a first down until late in the second quarter and finishing the day with five sacks, three of those by Drake Jackson.

They faced a tougher test at the Rams in Week 2 but still came out on top, 30-23. Purdy's 1-yard TD run just before halftime knotted the game, and Isaiah Oliver grabbed a third-quarter interception to set up Jake Moody's 57-yard field goal that put San Francisco in the lead for good.

After those two road tilts, the 49ers settled in at Levi's Stadium, where they dealt the Giants a 30-12 defeat. Deebo Samuel and Ronnie Bell caught TD passes, while safety Talanoa Hufanga pulled down his second interception of the season and was part of a unit that limited New York's offense to 150 yards.

Still, the team's most complete performance of the young season came in Week 4, when McCaffrey accounted for 177 scrimmage yards and scored four times and Purdy completed 20 of 21 passes for 283 yards and a TD in a 35-16 victory over Arizona. Purdy's 95.2 completion percentage was the fourth-best in NFL history (minimum 20 attempts), and the win gave the 49ers their

Jake Elliott (4) celebrates his 54-yard field goal in overtime that completed the Eagles' Week 3 win vs. Washington.

first 4-0 start since 2019, when they reached Super Bowl LIV.

"[It's] OK," said left tackle Trent Williams of the team's early success. "But as soon we finish one game, we've got to look forward to the next one. You celebrate wins. But at the end of the day, you got the Dallas Cowboys (in Week 5) rolling in, and resting on a four-game winning streak doesn't really seem like the thing to do right now."

WEEK 1: Lions Roar

The NFL's 104th season kicked off with a thriller at Arrowhead Stadium, where the Lions upended the defending Super Bowl champion Chiefs, 21-20. Detroit rookie cornerback Brian Branch had a 50-yard interception-return touchdown to tie things up in the third quarter, and after a pair of Harrison Butker field goals put the hosts back in front, 20-14, the Lions answered with a 75-yard march, scoring on David Montgomery's 8-yard TD run with 7:06 remaining. Kansas City had the ball two more times in the final minutes but was held without a first down, and the Lions, who closed out 2022 with eight wins in their final 10 games, ran out the clock. "A lot of work has been put in this offseason," said Detroit QB Jared Goff, who threw for 253 yards and opened the night's scoring with a 9-yard TD pass to Amon-Ra St. Brown. "You want to start off winning the first one, and we did that today. We didn't play the best on offense — [our] defense kept us in the game — but we found a way."

Taylor Swift was a staple at Chiefs games this season, though — similar to Donna Kelce (bottom left) — the pop icon may have dual allegiances. At a 2023 concert in Philadelphia, Swift told the crowd that she is a big Eagles fan.

EXTRA POINTS: Tua Tagovailoa threw for 466 yards, fourth-most in a season-opener in NFL history, helping the Dolphins rally to a 36-34 victory over the Chargers. Tyreek Hill had 11 receptions for 215 yards and two TDs, including the game-winning 4-yard catch with 1:45 to play. ... The 100th "Battle of Ohio" went to the Browns, with Deshaun Watson throwing for one TD and running for another, and Cleveland's defense surrendering only 142 total yards, en route to a 24-3 victory over the Bengals. ... Jordan Whitehead intercepted three passes and Xavier Gipson capped a late rally with an electrifying 65-yard punt-return TD in overtime as the Jets upended the Bills, 22-16.

WEEK 2: Cowboys Up

Dallas turned in its second straight dominant performance, handling the Jets, 30-10, to become the fifth team in the Super Bowl era to score at least 70 points and allow 10-or-fewer points through its first two games. There were standouts across the field for the victors: Dak Prescott threw a pair of touchdown passes, CeeDee Lamb matched a career high with 11 receptions, Brandon Aubrey made five field goals, and Micah Parsons led the defense with two sacks, a forced fumble,

RICH SCHULTZ/AP IMAGES; REED HOFFMANN/AP IMAGES (Taylor Swift)

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LEFT: Free-agent signee Jesse Bates made a strong first impression on Falcons fans, grabbing two interceptions in the team's Kickoff Weekend victory over Carolina and adding another in Week 3. RIGHT: Bills head coach Sean McDermott had his team off to another strong start with a 3-1 record.

and a fumble recovery. Jayron Kearse, Malik Hooker, and Trevon Diggs added interceptions. After touchdown receptions by Jake Ferguson and Luke Schoonmaker helped Dallas build an 18-10 halftime lead, Aubrey accounted for all the scoring after intermission with four field goals, including a 55-yarder. "We're off to an outstanding start," said Cowboys head coach Mike McCarthy, citing his defense, which limited New York to 215 total yards. "The pressure and the takeaways are at an incredible level after two games."

EXTRA POINTS: Patrick Mahomes threw for 305 yards and a pair of touchdowns, one of those to Travis Kelce, in the Chiefs' 17-9 victory at Jacksonville. Kelce moved into fourth place in NFL history for career receptions by a tight end. ... Josh Allen had three touchdown passes in leading the Bills past Las Vegas, 38-10. ... Lamar Jackson threw for 237 yards and two TDs and added 54 yards rushing in the Ravens' 27-24 win over Cincinnati. ... Anthony Richardson rushed for two touchdowns to carry the Colts past Houston, 31-20. ... Rookie safety Christian Izien recorded an interception for the second straight week, helping the Buccaneers improve to 2-0 with a 27-17 victory over Chicago. ... The Eagles' ground game exploded for 259 yards, with DeAndre Swift accounting for 175 of them while rushing for a TD, in their 34-28 win over the Vikings. ... Bijan Robinson rushed for 124 yards and Younghoe Koo kicked a 25-yard field goal in the final minute as Atlanta rallied with 13 fourth-quarter points to edge Green Bay, 25-24.

WEEK 3: Finishing Kick

In a battle between two of the game's elite kickers, Matt Gay and the Colts came out on top. Gay made five field goals, including an NFL single-game record four from beyond 50 yards, to lift Indianapolis to a 22-19 overtime victory over Justin Tucker and the Ravens. Three of Gay's field goals were from 53 yards, capped by his game-winner with just over a minute remaining in overtime. "I was in a pretty good groove," said Gay of what was going through his mind as he lined up the decisive attempt. "I was just kind of in that blackout mode where I wasn't thinking too much." After Gay had tied the game with a 53-yard field goal in the final minute of regulation, Tucker — who two years ago made the longest field goal in NFL history (66 yards) and earlier in the game had hit from 50 yards — still had a chance to win it for the Ravens, but his 61-yard attempt with one second left came up just short. The high drama carried into overtime, where both teams crossed midfield before being stopped on downs. But after the Colts took possession at their own 47 with 3:21 to play, they turned to running back Zack Moss for four consecutive carries, driving to the Ravens 35 and positioning Gay for the winning kick.

EXTRA POINTS: Raheem Mostert rushed for three touchdowns, De'Von Achane gained 203 yards on the ground, and Tyreek Hill caught a 54-yard TD pass on the game's third play to power the Dolphins to a 70-20 win over Denver, the most points scored by an NFL team since 1966. ... Buffalo's defense racked up nine sacks and forced five turnovers — among them a 32-yard pick-six by A.J. Epenesa — in defeating Washington, 37-3. ... Green Bay was being shut out entering the fourth quarter before rallying past the Saints, 18-17, completing the comeback on Jordan Love's 8-yard TD pass to Romeo Doubs with 2:56 to play. ... Keenan Allen caught 18 passes for 215 yards and added a 49-yard touchdown pass in the Chargers' 28-24 win at Minnesota. ... C.J. Stroud

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FIRST QUART

SCORES & AWARDS

WEEK 1 [September 7-11]		WEEK 2 [September 14-18]		WEEK 3 [September 21-25]		WEEK 4 [Sept. 28-Oct. 2]	
LIONS	**21**	VIKINGS	28	GIANTS	12	**LIONS**	**34**
CHIEFS	20	**EAGLES**	**34**	**49ERS**	**30**	PACKERS	20
PANTHERS	10	PACKERS	24	**COLTS**	**22** (OT)	FALCONS	7
FALCONS	**24**	**FALCONS**	**25**	RAVENS	19	**JAGUARS**	**23***
TEXANS	9	RAIDERS	10	TITANS	3	DOLPHINS	20
RAVENS	**25**	**BILLS**	**38**	**BROWNS**	**27**	**BILLS**	**48**
BENGALS	3	**RAVENS**	**27**	FALCONS	6	**VIKINGS**	**21**
BROWNS	**24**	BENGALS	24	**LIONS**	**20**	PANTHERS	13
JAGUARS	**31**	**SEAHAWKS**	**37** (OT)	SAINTS	17	**BRONCOS**	**31**
COLTS	21	LIONS	31	**PACKERS**	**18**	BEARS	28
BUCCANEERS	**20**	**COLTS**	**31**	**TEXANS**	**37**	**RAVENS**	**28**
VIKINGS	17	TEXANS	20	JAGUARS	17	BROWNS	3
TITANS	15	**CHIEFS**	**17**	BRONCOS	20	STEELERS	6
SAINTS	**16**	JAGUARS	9	**DOLPHINS**	**70**	**TEXANS**	**30**
49ERS	**30**	BEARS	17	**CHARGERS**	**28**	**RAMS**	**29** (OT)
STEELERS	7	**BUCCANEERS**	**27**	VIKINGS	24	COLTS	23
CARDINALS	16	CHARGERS	24	**PATRIOTS**	**15**	**BUCCANEERS**	**26**
COMMANDERS	**20**	**TITANS**	**27**	JETS	10	SAINTS	9
PACKERS	**38**	**GIANTS**	**31**	**BILLS**	**37**	COMMANDERS	31
BEARS	20	CARDINALS	28	COMMANDERS	3	**EAGLES**	**34** (OT)
RAIDERS	**17**	**49ERS**	**30**	PANTHERS	27	BENGALS	3
BRONCOS	16	RAMS	23	**SEAHAWKS**	**37**	**TITANS**	**27**
DOLPHINS	**36**	JETS	10	COWBOYS	16	RAIDERS	17
CHARGERS	34	**COWBOYS**	**30**	**CARDINALS**	**28**	**CHARGERS**	**24**
EAGLES	**25**	**COMMANDERS**	**35**	BEARS	10	PATRIOTS	3
PATRIOTS	20	BRONCOS	33	**CHIEFS**	**41**	**COWBOYS**	**38**
RAMS	**30**	**DOLPHINS**	**24**	**STEELERS**	**23**	CARDINALS	16
SEAHAWKS	13	PATRIOTS	17	RAIDERS	18	**49ERS**	**35**
COWBOYS	**40**	**SAINTS**	**20**	**EAGLES**	**25**	**CHIEFS**	**23**
GIANTS	0	PANTHERS	17	BUCCANEERS	11	JETS	20
BILLS	16	BROWNS	22	RAMS	16	**SEAHAWKS**	**24**
JETS	**22** (OT)	**STEELERS**	**26**	**BENGALS**	**19**	GIANTS	3

*Played in London

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Tua Tagovailoa, QB, Dolphins

AFC Defense
Jordan Whitehead, S, Jets

AFC Special Teams
Xavier Gipson, PR, Jets

NFC Offense
Brandon Aiyuk, WR, 49ers

NFC Defense
Jessie Bates, S, Falcons

NFC Special Teams
Jake Elliott, K, Eagles

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Xavier Gipson, WR, Jets

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Josh Allen, QB, Bills

AFC Defense
Alex Highsmith, LB, Steelers

AFC Special Teams
Nick Folk, K, Titans

NFC Offense
D'Andre Swift, RB, Eagles

NFC Defense
Micah Parsons, LB, Cowboys

NFC Special Teams
Jake Camarda, P, Buccaneers

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Puka Nacua, WR, Rams

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
De'Von Achane, RB, Dolphins

AFC Defense
Terrel Bernard, LB, Bills

AFC Special Teams
Matt Gay, K, Colts

NFC Offense
Kenneth Walker, RB, Seahawks

NFC Defense
Aidan Hutchinson, DL, Lions

NFC Special Teams
Matt Prater, K, Cardinals

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
De'Von Achane, RB, Dolphins

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Josh Allen, QB, Bills

AFC Defense
Khalil Mack, LB, Chargers

AFC Special Teams
Brandon McManus, K, Jaguars

NFC Offense
Christian McCaffrey, RB, 49ers

NFC Defense
Devon Witherspoon, CB, Seahawks

NFC Special Teams
Jake Elliott, K, Eagles

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Puka Nacua, WR, Rams

threw for 280 yards and a pair of TDs and Andrew Beck had an 85-yard kickoff-return touchdown in the Texans' 37-17 win at Jacksonville. ... The Lions upended the Falcons, 20-6, keyed by Sam LaPorta's eight receptions for 84 yards and one TD. ... Matt Prater became the third kicker in NFL history with at least three field goals of 60-or-more yards, converting a 62-yarder in the Cardinals' 28-16 win over Dallas.

WEEK 4: Allens at Work

Across two continents and on opposite sides of the field, the NFL's two Josh Allens keyed their team's victories. The Jaguars improved to 2-2 by defeating Atlanta, 23-7, at London's Wembley Stadium, thanks in part to linebacker Josh Allen, who registered three sacks and a forced fumble. "I'm ready to win games," said Allen, whose six sacks on the season tied him with the Chargers' Khalil Mack and the Steelers' T.J. Watt for the league lead. "I want to be the guy for the defense that we can count on." Trevor Lawrence connected with Calvin Ridley on a 30-yard TD pass to open the Jacksonville scoring and Brandon McManus' 56-yard field goal and Darious Williams' 61-yard interception-return touchdown made it 17-0 before halftime. In Buffalo, the Bills' Josh Allen showed again that he could be counted on, throwing for 320 yards and four touchdowns — his fourth career game with at least that many TDs — to hand Miami its first loss of the season, 48-20. He also had an 11-yard scoring run. The win improved the Bills to 3-1 and drew them even with the Dolphins in the AFC East. "Every week is a different week. Our guys were locked in on details in terms of game plan, specifics, and having a good presence in our locker room," said Allen, who threw three of his scoring passes to Stefon Diggs. "But as good as it looked out there, there are still things we can clean up."

EXTRA POINTS: Denver trailed by 21 points in the third quarter before rallying to upend the Bears, 31-28, powered by Russell Wilson's three TD passes. ... Lamar Jackson threw for two touchdowns and rushed for two others in the Ravens' 28-3 win at Cleveland. ... Khalil Mack totaled six sacks, one shy of the NFL single-game record, and forced two fumbles in the Chargers' 24-17 win over Las Vegas. ... Derrick Henry rushed for 122 yards and a TD and added a 2-yard touchdown pass as Tennessee defeated Cincinnati, 27-3. ... Harrison Smith recorded three sacks in the Vikings' 21-13 win at Carolina, while Antoine Winfield Jr. had a sack, a forced fumble, and a fumble recovery to lead the Bucs past New Orleans, 26-9. ... Devon Witherspoon's 97-yard interception-return TD put an exclamation point on Seattle's 24-3 victory over the Giants.

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SECOND QUARTER [Weeks 5-9]

PHILLY'S FINEST

A.J. Brown (11) played a key role in the Eagles' 8-1 start, becoming the first NFL player with 125+ receiving yards in six consecutive games.

ALEX BRANDON/AP IMAGES

NFL STANDINGS THROUGH WEEK 9

AFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Dolphins	**6-3-0**	**.667**	**285**	**225**
Bills	5-4-0	.556	240	160
Jets	4-4-0	.500	132	156
Patriots	2-7-0	.222	135	228

AFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Ravens	**7-2-0**	**.778**	**239**	**124**
Steelers	5-3-0	.625	133	163
Browns	5-3-0	.625	181	139
Bengals	5-3-0	.625	155	162

AFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Jaguars	**6-2-0**	**.750**	**193**	**156**
Texans	4-4-0	.500	187	165
Colts	4-5-0	.444	232	242
Titans	3-5-0	.375	148	160

AFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Chiefs	**7-2-0**	**.778**	**208**	**143**
Chargers	4-4-0	.500	201	174
Raiders	4-5-0	.444	156	193
Broncos	3-5-0	.375	172	226

NFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Eagles	**8-1-0**	**.889**	**252**	**195**
Cowboys	5-3-0	.625	220	148
Commanders	4-5-0	.444	191	245
Giants	2-7-0	.222	101	217

NFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Lions	**6-2-0**	**.750**	**200**	**165**
Vikings	5-4-0	.556	206	190
Packers	3-5-0	.375	160	159
Bears	2-7-0	.222	188	242

NFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Saints	**5-4-0**	**.556**	**195**	**171**
Falcons	4-5-0	.444	166	192
Buccaneers	3-5-0	.375	158	167
Panthers	1-7-0	.125	140	226

NFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
49ers	**5-3-0**	**.625**	**218**	**140**
Seahawks	5-3-0	.625	171	175
Rams	3-6-0	.333	178	204
Cardinals	1-8-0	.111	151	240

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Jaguars Hit Their Stride

LAWRENCE, ETIENNE SPARK TEAM'S FIVE-GAME WINNING STREAK

Trevor Lawrence's ascent to being one of the NFL's top quarterbacks had the Jaguars targeting a second consecutive AFC South title.

As the 2023 NFL season crossed the midway point, the Jacksonville Jaguars were showing confidence no matter where or when they played: on either side of the Atlantic Ocean; in prime time; or at the home of the six-time Super Bowl champions. The result was the top spot in the AFC South, driven by a five-game winning streak that put the Jaguars at 6-2, their best mark in 16 seasons.

They eased into the season's second half with a well-deserved bye in Week 9, one week after handling the Steelers, 20-10, at Acrisure Stadium. Trevor Lawrence threw for 292 yards in the win, which included a nifty third-quarter connection with Travis Etienne for a 56-yard touchdown, while Andrew Wingard and Antonio Johnson halted Pittsburgh drives with interceptions.

"I'm not surprised by [our] success, but we're definitely still hungry," said tight end Evan Engram, who caught all 10 of his targets against the Steelers and had 51 receptions on the season, well on pace to surpass his career high of 73 set in 2022.

The good vibes began with back-to-back wins in London, the second of which came in Week 5, 25-20 over Buffalo at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. Coupled with Week 4's victory over Atlanta, Jacksonville became the first NFL team to win multiple international games in a season. Against the Bills, Zay Jones opened the scoring with a 6-yard TD grab, Etienne rushed for 136 yards and a pair of fourth-quarter touchdowns — on runs of 35 and 6 yards — and Calvin Ridley added seven receptions for 122 yards.

Back home in Week 6, Lawrence threw TD passes to Brenton Strange and Christian Kirk in a 37-20 win over the Colts. The Jaguars' defense created four turnovers, with Josh Allen forcing an early fumble and Andre Cisco, Rayshawn Jenkins, and Darious Williams each registering interceptions.

The Jaguars then opened the Week 7 slate on Thursday night with a 31-24 victory over the Saints, breaking a late tie on Kirk's 44-yard touchdown catch. Etienne added two more rushing touchdowns and Foyesade Oluokun returned an interception 24 yards for another score.

"It's a glimpse of what we can be," said head coach Doug Pederson. "There are still some areas that we need to clean up. But the team [has] kind of figured some things out, figured out who we are as a football team. That's exciting to see. They've really embraced that."

WEEK 5: Day for the Dolphins

Miami improved to 4-1 and continued its otherworldly offensive pace while defeating the Giants, 31-16. Rookie De'Von Achane rushed for 151 yards, highlighted by a 76-yard touchdown run, and became the first Dolphins player since Jay Ajayi in 2016 to string together three consecutive 100-yard rushing games. He also became the first NFL player in 80 seasons to score seven touchdowns in his first four contests. "It's promising to know that he knows where he's going to line up," said quarterback Tua Tagovailoa, who completed 22 of 30 passes for 308 yards and two TDs.

GENE J. PUSKAR/AP IMAGES

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Myles Garrett (left) was making his presence felt as part of a dominant Browns defense, with 8.5 sacks and four forced fumbles at the mid-season mark. The play of rookie quarterback C.J. Stroud (right) had the Texans eying big things. Through eight games, he totaled 14 TD passes with only one interception.

"And then, basically, if he's getting the ball, you know it's going to be a big play more often than not." The Dolphins amassed 524 total yards, giving them 2,568 for the season, eclipsing the 1999 Rams for the most through five games in NFL history. "It speaks to what this group is capable of, and to the hard work from a lot of [people]: players, coaches, everyone," said Dolphins head coach Mike McDaniel. "People are going to give you their best shot, and you better continue to work and progress in your game if you're going to be satisfied, because you're going to have a bull's-eye on your back."

EXTRA POINTS: With his team's 27-20 victory at Minnesota, Chiefs head coach Andy Reid earned his 251st career regular-season win, moving past Tom Landry and into fourth place on the NFL's all-time list. ... Behind a big day from Jalen Hurts (303 passing yards, 72 rushing yards), the Eagles defeated the Rams, 23-14, and improved to 5-0. ... Ja'Marr Chase caught 15 passes for 192 yards and three TDs in the Bengals' 34-20 win at Arizona. ... T.J. Watt recorded two sacks and a fumble recovery as the Steelers edged Baltimore, 17-10. ... In a 21-19 loss to the Falcons, Houston's C.J. Stroud threw his 177th consecutive pass without an interception, breaking Dak Prescott's record to start a career.

WEEK 6: Perfect No More

The NFL's final two unbeaten teams went down to defeat, with the 49ers falling to Cleveland, 19-17, and the Eagles being clipped by the Jets, 20-14. San Francisco had won 15 consecutive regular-season contests — and scored 30-or-more points in each of its five wins to open 2023 — but was stymied by a relentless Browns defense and four Dustin Hopkins field goals, the last of those a 29-yarder with 1:40 remaining that provided the winning points. "The truth is, we're a good football team," Browns head coach Kevin Stefanski said. "We're not perfect, we know that. But we fought like crazy, and I'm just proud of so many guys." Cleveland's 1,002 yards allowed through six games were the fewest in the NFL in 52 seasons. At Met Life Stadium, Tony Adams' 45-yard interception return set up a Breece Hall touchdown run with 1:46 to go that propelled the Jets to victory. New York forced four turnovers on the day, including an interception by Quinnen Williams and a fumble recovery by Quincy Williams, making them the first brothers to record a takeaway for the same team in a game since Minnesota's E.J. and Erin Henderson in 2010. "There's no quit in this team," said QB Zach Wilson, who threw for 186 yards. One week after making five field goals, Greg Zuerlein put the Jets' first 12 points on the board with field goals from 43, 42, 35, and 38 yards.

EXTRA POINTS: Jared Goff threw for 353 yards, including touchdown passes to Amon-Ra St. Brown and Jameson Williams, as the Lions improved to 5-1 with a 20-6 win at Tampa Bay. ... Raheem Mostert scored three times (two rushing, one receiving), helping the Dolphins rally from an early 14-point deficit to defeat Carolina, 42-21. ... Jordan Hicks had 10 tackles, an interception, and a 42-yard fumble return-touchdown in the Vikings' 19-13 victory over Chicago. ... Brandon Aubrey kicked the go-ahead 39-yard field goal with 2:19 remaining and Stephon Gilmore followed with a game-sealing interception as the Cowboys clipped the Chargers, 20-17.

WEEK 7: Awesome Endings

Three games saw the winning points scored in the final moments, including the Patriots' 29-25 victory over Buffalo when Mac Jones threw

ZACH BOLINGER/AP IMAGES; ERIC CHRISTIAN SMITH/AP IMAGES (Stroud)

Roquan Smith (left) reached double figures in tackles five times in the first nine games and was keying a Ravens defense allowing a league-low 13.8 ppg. Kenneth Walker (right) rushed for 105 yards in the Seahawks' Week 7 win over Arizona.

TERRANCE WILLIAMS/AP IMAGES; BEN VANHOUTEN/AP IMAGES (Walker)

a 1-yard touchdown pass to Mike Gesicki with 12 seconds remaining. In that game, New England's Bill Belichick became the third head coach with 300 career regular-season victories. "I mean, it's great. [But] I'm really more focused on our team and this year," Belichick said of the milestone. "We'll worry about that later." Jones completed 25 of 30 passes for 272 yards and two touchdowns, but needed to rally the Patriots with a 75-yard drive after the Bills overcame a 22-10 deficit. In Tampa Bay, Atlanta edged the Buccaneers, 16-13, on Younghoe Koo's 51-yard field goal as time expired. Falcons QB Desmond Ridder opened the scoring with a 2-yard TD run and ignited the game-winning drive with a 39-yard pass to Kyle Pitts. "At the end of the day, we found a way," Atlanta head coach Arthur Smith said. "Our guys made big plays at big moments. It's a resilient group." Cleveland prevailed in the week's highest-scoring contest, edging the Colts, 39-38, on Kareem Hunt's 1-yard TD run with 15 seconds to go. The contest was the first in NFL history with three TDs of at least 50 yards and three field goals of 50-or-more yards. Still, the game's biggest star may have been Browns defensive end Myles Garrett, who contributed two sacks, two forced fumbles, and a blocked field goal. "We needed moxie, we needed grit, and we needed toughness at the end," Cleveland head coach Kevin Stefanski said. "We got all of that. We poured everything we had into this game."

EXTRA POINTS: D'Onta Foreman rushed for a pair of touchdowns and caught a 5-yard scoring pass from Tyson Bagent in the Bears' 30-12 win over Las Vegas. ... Lamar Jackson became the fourth NFL player with at least 350 passing yards, three touchdown passes, one rushing TD, and a passer rating of 150-or-higher in a game, accomplishing the feat in the Ravens' 38-6 win over Detroit. ... Patrick Mahomes threw for 424 yards and four touchdowns, with Travis Kelce catching 12 passes for 179 yards and one TD, in the Chiefs' 31-17 win over the Chargers. ... Jaylen Warren and Najee Harris ran for fourth-quarter TDs to rally the Steelers past the Rams, 24-17. ... Jordan Addison had TD receptions of 20 and 60 yards and Camryn Bynum grabbed a pair of fourth-quarter interceptions to lift the Vikings past San Francisco, 22-17.

WEEK 8: Eagles' Wings

Sparked by the play of Jalen Hurts and a record-breaking performance from A.J. Brown, the Eagles rallied to a 38-31 win at Washington to improve to a league-best 7-1. Hurts threw for 319 yards and four touchdowns, the last of those an 8-yard toss to Julio Jones that put Philadelphia ahead for good midway through the fourth quarter. But the receiving standout — again — was Brown, who set an NFL record by recording his sixth consecutive game with at least 125 receiving yards and had a pair of acrobatic touchdown grabs. The Commanders held a 14-3 second-quarter lead before Brown's one-handed 16-yard TD catch ignited the Eagles' offense. "I literally just did that in practice on Friday," he said. "It was the same corner (of the end zone) and everything. My teammates were like, 'I'm not surprised.'" The back and forth continued until the fourth quarter, when Hurts' 38-yard touchdown pass to DeVonta Smith tied things at 24-24 and Reed Blankenship followed with his second interception of the season, setting up the go-ahead points. DeAndre Swift then closed out the Philadelphia scoring with a 7-yard touchdown run.

EXTRA POINTS: Behind a pinpoint day from Joe Burrow (28-of-32 passing, 283 yards, 3 TDs), Cincinnati upended the 49ers, 31-17, for its fourth win in five games. ... Russell Wilson threw three TD passes and Denver's defense limited the Chiefs to three field goals in a 24-9 Broncos victory. ... A battle between the NFL's top two draft picks — the Panthers' Bryce Young (No. 1 overall) and the Texans' C.J. Stroud (No. 2) — went to Carolina, 15-13, on Eddy Pineiro's 23-yard field goal on the game's final play. ... QB Will Levis, making his first career start, completed 19 of 29 passes for 238 yards and four touchdowns in the Titans' 28-23 win over Atlanta, becoming the third player in NFL history with four touchdown passes in his debut. ... Cornerback DaRon Bland recorded his third interception-return touchdown of the season in the Cowboys' 43-20 win over the Rams. ... Gus Edwards rushed for three touchdowns in Baltimore's 31-24 win at Arizona. ... Julian Love's interception set up a 9-yard

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SCORES & AWARDS

WEEK 5 (October 5-9)		WEEK 6 (October 12-16)		WEEK 7 (October 19-23)		WEEK 8 (October 26-30)		WEEK 9 (November 2-6)	
BEARS	**40**	BRONCOS	8	**JAGUARS**	**31**	BUCCANEERS	18	TITANS	16
COMMANDERS	20	**CHIEFS**	**19**	SAINTS	24	**BILLS**	**24**	**STEELERS**	**20**
JAGUARS	**25***	**RAVENS**	**24***	LIONS	6	TEXANS	13	DOLPHINS	14*
BILLS	20	TITANS	16	**RAVENS**	**38**	**PANTHERS**	**15**	**CHIEFS**	**21***
TEXANS	19	**COMMANDERS**	**24**	RAIDERS	12	RAMS	20	**VIKINGS**	**31**
FALCONS	**21**	FALCONS	16	**BEARS**	**30**	**COWBOYS**	**43**	FALCONS	28
PANTHERS	24	**VIKINGS**	**19**	**BROWNS**	**39**	**VIKINGS**	**24**	SEAHAWKS	3
LIONS	**42**	BEARS	13	COLTS	38	PACKERS	10	**RAVENS**	**37**
TITANS	16	SEAHAWKS	13	BILLS	25	**SAINTS**	**38**	CARDINALS	0
COLTS	**23**	**BENGALS**	**17**	**PATRIOTS**	**29**	COLTS	27	**BROWNS**	**27**
GIANTS	16	49ERS	17	COMMANDERS	7	PATRIOTS	17	RAMS	3
DOLPHINS	**31**	**BROWNS**	**19**	**GIANTS**	**14**	**DOLPHINS**	**31**	**PACKERS**	**20**
SAINTS	**34**	SAINTS	13	**FALCONS**	**16**	**JETS**	**13** (OT)	BUCCANEERS	37
PATRIOTS	0	**TEXANS**	**20**	BUCCANEERS	13	GIANTS	10	**TEXANS**	**39**
RAVENS	10	COLTS	20	**STEELERS**	**24**	**JAGUARS**	**20**	**COMMANDERS**	**20**
STEELERS	**17**	**JAGUARS**	**37**	RAMS	17	STEELERS	10	PATRIOTS	17
BENGALS	**34**	PANTHERS	21	CARDINALS	10	FALCONS	23	BEARS	17
CARDINALS	20	**DOLPHINS**	**42**	**SEAHAWKS**	**20**	**TITANS**	**28**	**SAINTS**	**24**
EAGLES	**23**	PATRIOTS	17	PACKERS	17	**EAGLES**	**38**	**COLTS**	**27**
RAMS	14	**RAIDERS**	**21**	**BRONCOS**	**19**	COMMANDERS	31	PANTHERS	13
JETS	**31**	CARDINALS	9	CHARGERS	17	BROWNS	20	GIANTS	6
BRONCOS	21	**RAMS**	**26**	**CHIEFS**	**31**	**SEAHAWKS**	**24**	**RAIDERS**	**30**
CHIEFS	**27**	EAGLES	14	DOLPHINS	17	**RAVENS**	**31**	COWBOYS	23
VIKINGS	20	**JETS**	**20**	**EAGLES**	**31**	CARDINALS	24	**EAGLES**	**28**
COWBOYS	10	**LIONS**	**20**	49ERS	17	CHIEFS	9	BILLS	18
49ERS	**42**	BUCCANEERS	6	**VIKINGS**	**22**	**BRONCOS**	**24**	**BENGALS**	**24**
PACKERS	13	GIANTS	9			**BENGALS**	**31**	**CHARGERS**	**27**
RAIDERS	**17**	**BILLS**	**14**			49ERS	17	JETS	6
		COWBOYS	**20**			BEARS	13		
		CHARGERS	17			**CHARGERS**	**30**		
						RAIDERS	14		
						LIONS	**26**		

*Played in London

BYES: BROWNS, BUCCANEERS, CHARGERS, SEAHAWKS

*Played in London

BYES: PACKERS, STEELERS

BYES: BENGALS, COWBOYS, JETS, PANTHERS, TEXANS, TITANS

*Played in Frankfurt

BYES: BRONCOS, 49ERS, JAGUARS, LIONS

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Ja'Marr Chase, WR, Bengals

AFC Defense
Maxx Crosby, DE, Raiders

AFC Special Teams
Greg Zuerlein, K, Jets

NFC Offense
DJ Moore, WR, Bears

NFC Defense
Fred Warner, LB, 49ers

NFC Special Teams
Blake Grupe, K, Saints

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
De'Von Achane, RB, Dolphins

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Raheem Mostert, RB, Dolphins

AFC Defense
Blake Cashman, LB, Texans

AFC Special Teams
Dustin Hopkins, K, Browns

NFC Offense
Jared Goff, QB, Lions

NFC Defense
Jordan Hicks, LB, Vikings

NFC Special Teams
Jamison Crowder, PR, Commanders

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Byron Young, LB, Rams

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Lamar Jackson, QB, Ravens

AFC Defense
Myles Garrett, DE, Browns

AFC Special Teams
Dustin Hopkins, K, Browns

NFC Offense
A.J. Brown, WR, Eagles

NFC Defense
Camryn Bynum, S, Vikings

NFC Special Teams
Younghoe Koo, K, Falcons

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Puka Nacua, WR, Rams

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Joe Burrow, QB, Bengals

AFC Defense
Justin Simmons, S, Broncos

AFC Special Teams
Thomas Morstead, P, Jets

NFC Offense
Jalen Hurts, QB, Eagles

NFC Defense
Frankie Luvu, LB, Panthers

NFC Special Teams
Brandon Aubrey, K, Cowboys

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Will Levis, QB, Titans

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
C.J. Stroud, QB, Texans

AFC Defense
Kenny Moore, CB, Colts

AFC Special Teams
Derius Davis, WR, Chargers

NFC Offense
Joshua Dobbs, QB, Vikings

NFC Defense
Paulson Adebo, CB, Saints

NFC Special Teams
Tress Way, P, Commanders

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
C.J. Stroud, QB, Texans

TD pass from Geno Smith to Jaxon Smith-Njigba with 38 seconds left in regulation to lift the Seahawks to a 24-20 victory over Cleveland.

WEEK 9: Heroics in Houston

C.J. Stroud's fifth touchdown pass of the game — a 15-yard throw to Tank Dell — put an exclamation point on a record-breaking performance and gave the Texans a 39-37 victory over Tampa Bay. A 14-yard Baker Mayfield-to-Cade Otton TD pass with 46 seconds remaining in regulation had moved the Buccaneers ahead, but Stroud countered with a six-play, 75-yard drive capped by his strike to Dell with just six seconds left on the clock. "That connection and that bond that Tank and C.J. have — it's real," said Texans head coach DeMeco Ryans, after his team improved to 4-4. "You see it off the field, on the field. They have a true bond, and it's fun to watch those guys work together." Stroud's 147.8 passer rating and 470 passing yards set NFL records for a rookie, with Noah Brown (153 yards), Dalton Schultz (130), and Dell (114) each topping 100 receiving yards. The Texans played most of the day without kicker Ka'imi Fairbairn and attempted two-point conversions after each of their second-half TDs, but turned to running back Dare Ogunbowale for a 29-yard field goal that put them ahead, 33-30, midway through the fourth quarter. He became the first non-kicker or punter to make a field goal since 2004. "Dare, he's truly the player of the game," Ryans said. "For him stepping up the way he did for us was outstanding."

EXTRA POINTS: Patrick Mahomes threw two touchdown passes and safeties Mike Edwards and Bryan Cook combined to return a fumble 63 yards for another score as the Chiefs edged the Dolphins, 21-14, in Frankfurt, Germany, to become the first NFL team to win regular-season games in four different countries. ... Five days after being traded to the Vikings, Joshua Dobbs came off the bench to throw for 158 yards and rush for another 66, capped by his 6-yard TD pass to Brandon Powell with 22 seconds remaining in regulation that lifted Minnesota to a 31-28 victory over Atlanta. ... By defeating the Cowboys, 28-23, the Eagles became the first team since the 2005-06 Colts to begin back-to-back seasons with an 8-1 record. ... Kenny Pickett's 3-yard TD pass to Diontae Johnson with 4:02 to play provided the go-ahead points in the Steelers' 20-16 win over Tennessee. ... Taysom Hill's 3-yard TD pass to Juwan Johnson snapped a fourth-quarter tie to give the Saints a 24-17 victory over Chicago.

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THIRD QUARTER [Weeks 10-14]

SUPER SACKER

The Steelers' T.J. Watt reached double-figures in sacks for the fifth time in his career and his 14 sacks through Week 14 had him on pace to lead the NFL.

MATT DURISKO/AP IMAGES

NFL STANDINGS THROUGH WEEK 14

*Clinched playoff berth

AFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Dolphins	**9-4-0**	**.692**	**411**	**294**
Bills	7-6-0	.538	348	244
Jets	5-8-0	.385	201	257
Patriots	3-10-0	.231	169	272

AFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Ravens	**10-3-0**	**.769**	**361**	**218**
Browns	8-5-0	.615	289	272
Steelers	7-6-0	.538	210	250
Bengals	7-6-0	.538	280	287

AFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Jaguars	**8-5-0**	**.615**	**312**	**290**
Colts	7-6-0	.538	314	330
Texans	7-6-0	.538	287	279
Titans	5-8-0	.385	241	282

AFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Chiefs	**8-5-0**	**.615**	**292**	**228**
Broncos	7-6-0	.538	287	309
Chargers	5-8-0	.385	282	282
Raiders	5-8-0	.385	202	259

NFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Cowboys	**10-3-0**	**.769**	**421**	**233**
Eagles	10-3-0	.769	342	321
Giants	5-8-0	.385	183	314
Commanders	4-9-0	.308	261	395

NFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Lions	**9-4-0**	**.692**	**340**	**314**
Vikings	7-6-0	.538	266	242
Packers	6-7-0	.462	280	267
Bears	5-8-0	.385	270	309

NFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Buccaneers	**6-7-0**	**.462**	**262**	**270**
Falcons	6-7-0	.462	251	269
Saints	6-7-0	.462	285	261
Panthers	1-12-0	.077	197	341

NFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
49ers*	**10-3-0**	**.769**	**380**	**205**
Rams	6-7-0	.462	299	290
Seahawks	6-7-0	.462	280	318
Cardinals	3-10-0	.231	230	331

Dak Prescott threw four touchdown passes in each of the Cowboys' home wins over the Giants and the Commanders.

PETER JONELEIT/AP IMAGES

Cowboys Show Star Power

PRIME-TIME WIN OVER EAGLES IS HIGHLIGHT OF FIVE-GAME WINNING STREAK

As the 2023 season barreled toward the stretch run, the Dallas Cowboys were making all the right moves. And the biggest move of all came in the standings, where they found themselves knotted with the Eagles atop the NFC East.

Offense played a big part in the surge as the Cowboys averaged better than 40 ppg during a five-game winning streak that boosted their record to 10-3. Yet the defense stepped up its play as well. Opponents failed to top 17 points in four of those games. Dallas even overcame a dose of adversity when an emergency appendectomy forced head coach Mike McCarthy to miss two days of practice leading up to the Eagles game.

"I just wanted to do my part," said McCarthy, who was back on the sidelines for the Week 14 tilt. "I wanted to make sure I was prepared as I normally am. I was a little nervous about it. We're all creatures of habit."

The Cowboys continued their habit of winning at home, dominating in all three phases while racking up their 15th consecutive win at AT&T Stadium, 33-13 over the Eagles. Dak Prescott threw for two TDs, Brandon Aubrey kicked four field goals — becoming the first player to make two field goals of 59+ yards in a game — and the defense forced three turnovers in its own territory to halt Philly scoring threats.

Momentum started in Week 10 with a 49-17 win over the Giants when the Cowboys amassed 640 total yards, 12 shy of the franchise record. One week later, they pulled away late for a 33-10 victory over Carolina.

It was much the same story on Thanksgiving Day against the Commanders, when Dallas erupted for 25 fourth-quarter points en route to a 45-10 decision. Six of those points came when cornerback DaRon Bland set an NFL record with

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The Broncos' Alex Singleton had a season-high 16 tackles in the team's Week 11 win over Minnesota.

With four games remaining, the Lions' David Montgomery had already set a career high with 10 rushing touchdowns and was on pace for the second 1,000-yard rushing season of his career.

his fifth interception-return touchdown of the year by bringing back a Sam Howell pass 63 yards. Things were a bit more difficult in Week 13 as Seattle carved out an eight-point fourth quarter lead, but a pair of Aubrey field goals bookended a 12-yard TD grab by Jake Ferguson that propelled the Cowboys to a 41-35 win.

"I told the team afterward we need games like this," McCarthy said. "To get to where you want to go, you have to win these kinds of games."

WEEK 10: Clutch Kicks

Six teams — the Browns, Cardinals, Lions, Seahawks, Texans, and Broncos — made game-winning field goals on the last play of regulation, the most in a week in NFL history. Detroit improved to 7-2 with its 41-38 victory over the Chargers, capped by Riley Patterson's 41-yard field goal. The Chargers scored touchdowns on their final five possessions, the last of those tying the game with 3:34 to go, before Lions QB Jared Goff (23-of-33 passing, 333 yards, 2 TDs) led his team on a drive that included a fourth-and-2 conversion from the Los Angeles 26-yard line. "One of those things we haven't done a lot of is win the close shootouts. Every time you win and get it done, you learn something from it," Detroit head coach Dan Campbell said. Seattle edged Washington, 29-26, after allowing a game-tying touchdown with 52 seconds to go. Geno Smith (31-of-47, 369 yards, 2 TDs) found DK Metcalf for a 17-yard gain and then hit him on a 27-yard pass that set up Jason Myers' 43-yard field goal. "It was a beautiful illustration of what everybody did right down the stretch," Seattle head coach Pete Carroll said. "That's all we hope to do when we talk about finishing: Everybody just keep doing stuff that's right and have the chance to win, even if it takes us to the last play."

EXTRA POINTS: In their 30-27 victory at Cincinnati, the Texans became the first team in 25 years to have a 350-yard passer (C.J. Stroud: 356 yards), a 150-yard rusher (Devin Singletary: 150 yards, 1 TD), and a 150-yard receiver (Noah Brown: 172 yards) in a game. ... The Steelers held off Green Bay, 23-19, with T.J. Watt notching his 88th career sack, surpassing his brother, JJ, for the second-most sacks by a player in his first 100 games. ... In the 50th regular-season international game in NFL history, the Colts edged New England, 10-6, in Frankfurt, with interceptions by Julian Blackmon and Rodney Thomas stopping late Patriots drives.

WEEK 11: Broncos Go Extra Mile

Denver won for the fourth consecutive time, rallying late to edge the Vikings, 21-20, and improve to 5-5. Relying on Wil Lutz for all their offense through the game's first 50 minutes — he kicked five field goals — the hosts pulled out the victory when QB Russell Wilson drove his team 75 yards and hit a leaping Courtland Sutton for a 15-yard touchdown with 1:03 to play. "We just believe in each other," said Wilson, who completed 27 of 35 passes for 259 yards. "We knew we were going to win this game." The Broncos' defense had three takeaways on the night, the last of those a Ja'Quan McMillian interception that set up Lutz's 28-yard field goal and closed the gap to 17-15 with 10:37 remaining. Minnesota would keep the ball for more than seven minutes on its next possession but had to settle for a field goal that kept it a one-score game. "We have a great group of guys who are never going to quit," said wide receiver Jerry Jeudy, who caught five passes in the win. "We're going to [play] until the clock says zero."

PETER JONELEIT/AP IMAGES; BART YOUNG/AP IMAGES (Singleton)

Behind the play of Lamar Jackson, the Ravens were on an impressive run that saw them own the AFC's best record (10-3) and a two-game lead in the AFC North.

Tyreek Hill amassed 100 receiving yards in eight of the Dolphins' first 13 games, including a 157-yard, two-touchdown effort in a Week 13 victory over Washington.

DANIEL KUCIN JR./AP IMAGES; VERA NIEUWENHUIJS/AP IMAGES (HILL)

EXTRA POINTS: Cleveland's Dorian Thompson-Robinson and the Giants' Tommy DeVito became the eighth and ninth rookie quarterbacks to start and win a game in 2023, the most in a season since 1950. Thompson-Robinson directed an 8-play, 48-yard drive in the final minute of regulation that ended with Dustin Hopkins' 34-yard field goal and a 13-10 victory over the Steelers. DeVito threw for 246 yards and three touchdowns to lift New York over Washington, 31-19. ... The Lions overcame a 12-point deficit in the final three minutes to defeat the Bears, 31-26. Jared Goff's 32-yard touchdown pass to Jameson Williams cut into the margin, and after the defense held Chicago without a first down, David Montgomery scored the go-ahead TD on a 1-yard run with 29 seconds left. ... In a rematch of Super Bowl LVII, Jalen Hurts rushed for two TDs and the Eagles' defense forced a pair of red zone turnovers as Philadelphia rallied past Kansas City, 21-17.

WEEK 12: Philly Focus

Trailing at halftime for the fourth consecutive game, the Eagles rebounded to upend the Bills, 37-34, in overtime. Jalen Hurts threw three touchdown passes over the span of four second-half plays and added a pair of scoring runs, capped by his walk-off 12-yard sprint with 2:37 remaining in the extra session. It was his 11th career game with at least two rushing TDs, surpassing Cam Newton for the most by a quarterback in NFL history. "You know he's clutch," Eagles head coach Nick Sirianni said. "He's been clutch for us, clutch for this city, and clutch for this team for the last three years now." Touchdown catches by A.J. Brown, DeVonta Smith, and Olamide Zaccheaus put the Eagles ahead, 28-24, and after the Bills regained the lead, a quick drive set up Jake Elliott's 59-yard field goal that sent the game into overtime. The Bills kicked a go-ahead field goal to open the extra session, but Philadelphia answered — with D'Andre Swift breaking off a 16-yard run that preceded Hurts' game-winning TD.

EXTRA POINTS: In the league's first-ever Black Friday game, Miami defeated the Jets, 34-13, as Tyreek Hill caught nine passes for 102 yards and a TD. ... Trevor Lawrence threw for 364 yards, including a go-ahead touchdown to Calvin Ridley late in the third quarter, to lead the Jaguars past Houston, 24-21, in a battle for the outright lead in the AFC South. ... Kyren Williams accounted for 204 scrimmage yards (143 rushing, 61 receiving) and caught two TD passes to spark the Rams past Arizona, 37-14. ... The Ravens' Zay Flowers scored twice, including on a 37-yard run in the final minutes that provided the cushion in a 20-10 win over the Chargers.

WEEK 13: A Packer Push

Green Bay continued to work its way into the NFC playoff race, taking down Kansas City, 27-19. Jordan Love (25-of-36, 267 yards) led the Packers to touchdowns on three of their first four possessions while the team's defense kept the Chiefs out of the end zone in the early going, limiting the visitors to two first-half field goals. "It was just a wild, crazy first half in terms of long, sustained drives," Green Bay head coach Matt LaFleur said. Kansas City threatened twice late in the game, but one drive ended with a Keisean Nixon interception and the other was stopped when Patrick Mahomes' final pass was knocked down in the end zone. "They're coming together," said LaFleur, who improved his December

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SCORES & AWARDS

WEEK 10 [November 9-13]		WEEK 11 [November 16-20]		WEEK 12 [November 23-27]		WEEK 13 [Nov. 30-Dec. 4]		WEEK 14 [December 7-11]	
PANTHERS	13	BENGALS	20	**PACKERS**	**29**	SEAHAWKS	35	**PATRIOTS**	**21**
BEARS	**16**	**RAVENS**	**34**	LIONS	22	**COWBOYS**	**41**	STEELERS	18
COLTS	**10***	**COWBOYS**	**33**	COMMANDERS	10	BRONCOS	17	**BUCCANEERS**	**29**
PATRIOTS	6	PANTHERS	10	**COWBOYS**	**45**	**TEXANS**	**22**	FALCONS	25
BROWNS	**33**	STEELERS	10	**49ERS**	**31**	**CHARGERS**	**6**	RAMS	31
RAVENS	31	**BROWNS**	**13**	SEAHAWKS	13	PATRIOTS	0	**RAVENS**	**37** (OT)
TEXANS	**30**	BEARS	26	**DOLPHINS**	**34**	**LIONS**	**33**	LIONS	13
BENGALS	27	**LIONS**	**31**	JETS	13	SAINTS	28	**BEARS**	**28**
49ERS	**34**	CHARGERS	20	SAINTS	15	**FALCONS**	**13**	COLTS	14
JAGUARS	3	**PACKERS**	**23**	**FALCONS**	**24**	JETS	8	**BENGALS**	**34**
SAINTS	19	CARDINALS	16	**STEELERS**	**16**	**CARDINALS**	**24**	JAGUARS	27
VIKINGS	**27**	**TEXANS**	**21**	BENGALS	10	STEELERS	10	**BROWNS**	**31**
PACKERS	19	TITANS	14	**JAGUARS**	**24**	**COLTS**	**31**	PANTHERS	6
STEELERS	**23**	**JAGUARS**	**34**	TEXANS	21	TITANS	28 (OT)	**SAINTS**	**28**
TITANS	6	RAIDERS	13	BUCCANEERS	20	**DOLPHINS**	**45**	TEXANS	6
BUCCANEERS	**20**	**DOLPHINS**	**20**	**COLTS**	**27**	COMMANDERS	15	**JETS**	**30**
FALCONS	23	**GIANTS**	**31**	PATRIOTS	7	PANTHERS	18	**VIKINGS**	**3**
CARDINALS	**25**	COMMANDERS	19	**GIANTS**	**10**	**BUCCANEERS**	**21**	RAIDERS	0
LIONS	**41**	BUCCANEERS	14	PANTHERS	10	BROWNS	19	SEAHAWKS	16
CHARGERS	38	**49ERS**	**27**	**TITANS**	**17**	**RAMS**	**36**	**49ERS**	**28**
GIANTS	17	JETS	6	**RAMS**	**37**	**49ERS**	**42**	**BILLS**	**20**
COWBOYS	**49**	**BILLS**	**32**	CARDINALS	14	EAGLES	19	CHIEFS	17
COMMANDERS	26	SEAHAWKS	16	BROWNS	12	CHIEFS	19	**BRONCOS**	**24**
SEAHAWKS	**29**	**RAMS**	**17**	**BRONCOS**	**29**	**PACKERS**	**27**	CHARGERS	7
JETS	12	VIKINGS	20	**CHIEFS**	**31**	**BENGALS**	**34**	EAGLES	13
RAIDERS	**16**	**BRONCOS**	**21**	RAIDERS	17	JAGUARS	31 (OT)	**COWBOYS**	**33**
BRONCOS	**24**	**EAGLES**	**21**	BILLS	34			**TITANS**	**28**
BILLS	22	CHIEFS	17	**EAGLES**	**37** (OT)			DOLPHINS	27
				RAVENS	**20**			PACKERS	22
				CHARGERS	10			**GIANTS**	**24**
				BEARS	**12**				
				VIKINGS	10				

*Played in Frankfurt

BYES: CHIEFS, DOLPHINS, EAGLES, RAMS

BYES: COLTS, FALCONS, PATRIOTS, SAINTS

BYES: BEARS, BILLS, GIANTS, RAIDERS, RAVENS, VIKINGS

BYES: CARDINALS, COMMANDERS

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK	PLAYERS OF THE WEEK	PLAYERS OF THE WEEK	PLAYERS OF THE WEEK	PLAYERS OF THE WEEK
AFC Offense	AFC Offense	AFC Offense	AFC Offense	AFC Offense
Devin Singletary, RB, Texans	**Trevor Lawrence**, QB, Jaguars	**Patrick Mahomes**, QB, Chiefs	**Jake Browning**, QB, Bengals	**Zach Wilson**, QB, Jets
AFC Defense	AFC Defense	AFC Defense	AFC Defense	AFC Defense
Robert Spillane, LB, Raiders	**Jalen Ramsey**, CB, Dolphins	**Josh Allen**, LB, Jaguars	**Derek Stingley**, CB, Texans	**Harold Landry**, LB, Titans
AFC Special Teams	AFC Special Teams	AFC Special Teams	AFC Special Teams	AFC Special Teams
Marvin Mims, WR, Broncos	**Reggie Gilliam**, FB, Bills	**Ryan Stonehouse**, P, Titans	**JK Scott**, P, Chargers	**Tylan Wallace**, WR, Ravens
NFC Offense	NFC Offense	NFC Offense	NFC Offense	NFC Offense
CeeDee Lamb, WR, Cowboys	**Brock Purdy**, QB, 49ers	**Kyren Williams**, RB, Rams	**Deebo Samuel**, WR, 49ers	**Tommy DeVito**, QB, Giants
NFC Defense	NFC Defense	NFC Defense	NFC Defense	NFC Defense
Nick Bosa, DL, 49ers	**DaRon Bland**, CB, Cowboys	**Jessie Bates**, S, Falcons	**Antoine Winfield**, S, Buccaneers	**Ivan Pace**, LB, Vikings
NFC Special Teams	NFC Special Teams	NFC Special Teams	NFC Special Teams	NFC Special Teams
Jason Myers, K, Seahawks	**Ethan Evans**, P, Rams	**Jake Elliott**, K, Eagles	**Jalen Reeves-Maybin**, LB, Lions	**Brandon Aubrey**, K, Cowboys
Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie	Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie	Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie	Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie	Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
C.J. Stroud, QB, Texans	**Tommy DeVito**, QB, Giants	**Jalin Hyatt**, WR, Giants	**Sam LaPorta**, TE, Lions	**Tommy DeVito**, QB, Giants

coaching record to 16-0. "They're working. They're getting better. They're playing faster, playing more confident."

EXTRA POINTS: The Lions stopped the Saints, 33-28, as Sam LaPorta caught a 13-yard TD as part of a 21-point first quarter and became the league's first rookie tight end in 28 seasons with at least nine receptions, 140 receiving yards, and a touchdown reception in a game. ... Nico Collins had 191 receiving yards, including a fourth-quarter TD catch, and Jimmie Ward sealed the victory with an end zone interception in the closing seconds as the Texans edged the Broncos, 22-17. ... In the Buccaneers' 21-18 win over Carolina, Mike Evans (7 receptions, 162 yards, 1 TD) became the first player in NFL history with at least 60 catches and 1,000 receiving yards in each of his first 10 seasons.

WEEK 14: Monday Night Mania

Prime-time thrillers capped the week's action with the Titans scoring two touchdowns in the final three minutes to clip the Dolphins, 28-27, and the Giants edging the Packers, 24-22, on a field goal as time expired. Tennessee trailed by 14 points before Will Levis orchestrated a nine-play drive that ended with a 3-yard TD pass to DeAndre Hopkins and a 2-point conversion. After the Titans forced a three-and-out, Levis directed another drive that Derrick Henry finished off with a 3-yard TD run. Harold Landry's third sack of the night then sealed the win. "The defense kept giving us a chance," Titans head coach Mike Vrabel said. "And then the offense needed to come through, and they came through." The Giants were behind by a point after a Green Bay touchdown with 1:33 remaining, but Tommy DeVito answered by taking his team 57 yards in eight plays, capped by Randy Bullock's 37-yard field goal. DeVito finished the night with 71 yards rushing and threw for another 158, including a TD. "I know it's probably not easy for him being that he's from around here," Giants head coach Brian Daboll said of DeVito, who was born in Livingston, N.J. "There's a lot on your plate, and you got to keep [focused on] the main thing, that being football. I'm proud of him. He's put in a lot of work since he got here."

EXTRA POINTS: Helped by their 28-16 win over Seattle, the 49ers became the first team to clinch a playoff berth. Deebo Samuel had 149 receiving yards and scored on a 54-yard catch and a 1-yard run for the victors. ... Tyler Bass' 39-yard field goal with 1:54 left in regulation snapped a tie and gave the Bills a 20-17 win at Kansas City. ... Tylan Wallace recorded the fourth overtime punt-return touchdown in NFL history, going 76 yards for the winning points as Baltimore defeated the Rams, 37-31.

FOURTH QUARTER [Weeks 15-18]

BUFFALO'S BEST

Josh Allen threw 29 touchdown passes and rushed for another 15, tied for second in the NFL, while leading the Bills to their fourth straight AFC East title.

WILFREDO LEE/AP IMAGES

FINAL NFL STANDINGS

‡Division Champion †Wild Card

AFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Bills‡	11-6-0	.647	451	311
Dolphins†	11-6-0	.647	496	391
Jets	7-10-0	.412	268	355
Patriots	4-13-0	.235	236	366

AFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Ravens‡	13-4-0	.765	483	280
Browns†	11-6-0	.647	396	362
Steelers†	10-7-0	.588	304	324
Bengals	9-8-0	.529	366	384

AFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Texans‡	10-7-0	.588	377	353
Jaguars	9-8-0	.529	377	371
Colts	9-8-0	.529	396	415
Titans	6-11-0	.353	305	367

AFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Chiefs‡	11-6-0	.647	371	294
Raiders	8-9-0	.471	332	331
Broncos	8-9-0	.471	357	413
Chargers	5-12-0	.294	346	398

NFC EAST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Cowboys‡	12-5-0	.706	509	315
Eagles†	11-6-0	.647	433	428
Giants	6-11-0	.353	266	407
Commanders	4-13-0	.235	329	518

NFC NORTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Lions‡	12-5-0	.706	461	395
Packers†	9-8-0	.529	383	350
Vikings	7-10-0	.412	344	362
Bears	7-10-0	.412	360	379

NFC SOUTH	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
Buccaneers‡	9-8-0	.529	348	325
Saints	9-8-0	.529	402	327
Falcons	7-10-0	.412	321	373
Panthers	2-15-0	.118	236	416

NFC WEST	W-L-T	PCT	PF	PA
49ers‡	12-5-0	.706	491	298
Rams†	10-7-0	.588	404	377
Seahawks	9-8-0	.529	364	402
Cardinals	4-13-0	.235	330	455

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John Harbaugh's 16th season at the helm of the Ravens was one of his most successful. Baltimore captured its fifth AFC North title under his watch, and the team's 13-4 record was the best in the NFL.

PHELAN M. EBENHACK/AP IMAGES

Ravens Reach AFC's Top Perch

STATEMENT WIN OVER THE 49ERS HIGHLIGHTS LATE-SEASON RISE

Driven by the play of quarterback Lamar Jackson and an opportunistic defense, the Baltimore Ravens used a six-game winning streak to pull away from a crowded field and secure the AFC's top seed and coveted first-round bye.

"Our guys work hard. They compete hard. Everybody wants to be respected," said Ravens head coach John Harbaugh, whose team took aim on returning to the Super Bowl for the first time since winning the title 11 years ago. "There's one way to be respected, and that's to go out there and earn it."

The most impressive among a string of standout victories came in Week 16, a 33-19 Christmas night victory at San Francisco. Jackson fired a pair of touchdown passes 18 seconds apart in the third quarter — a 6-yarder to Nelson Agholor and a 9-yarder to Zay Flowers — while Baltimore's defense grabbed four interceptions, two of those by Kyle Hamilton.

"I thought Lamar had an MVP performance [vs. the 49ers]," Harbaugh said. "It takes a team to create a performance like that, but it takes a player to play at that level, to play at an MVP level. Lamar was all over the field."

In Week 17, the Ravens locked up their first AFC North crown since 2019 and also claimed the conference's No. 1 seed by outpointing Miami, 56-19. Jackson completed 18 of 21 passes (85.7 percent) for 321 yards and five touchdowns, becoming just the second QB in NFL history to have two games with 5 TDs and a 158.3 rating.

A 23-7 victory at Jacksonville was also part of the season-ending surge. Gus Edwards ran for a TD, Isaiah Likely caught a scoring pass, and the Ravens' defense fended off several

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The Rams' Kyren Williams topped 100 yards rushing six times in his final nine games, including 104 in a Week 16 win over the Saints.

Jaguars scoring threats. In that win, defensive tackle Justin Madubuike tied an NFL mark by recording at least a half-sack in his 11th consecutive game.

Making their accomplishment even more impressive, the Ravens' success took place in the league's toughest division. All four AFC North teams — the Ravens (13-4), Browns (11-6), Steelers (10-7), and Bengals (9-8) — finished with a winning record, the first NFL division to achieve that feat in 88 years.

WEEK 15: Cincy Strikes

The league's Saturday triple-header started with a thriller as the Bengals rallied past the Vikings in overtime, 27-24, for their third consecutive victory. With his team trailing 17-3, Cincinnati QB Jake Browning (29-of-42, 324 yards, 2 TDs) continually came up with clutch throws while directing three fourth-quarter touchdown drives. On the first, he completed seven straight passes, the last of those a 13-yard TD to Tee Higgins. On Cincy's next possession, he converted a third-and-21 with a 24-yard pass to Ja'Marr Chase before Joe Mixon pounded the ball into the end zone on a 1-yard run to tie things at 17-17. After a Vikings touchdown, Browning led another drive, this one ending with Higgins making a twisting 21-yard TD catch with 39 seconds left in regulation that saw him reach the ball over the goal line before going out of bounds. In overtime, Minnesota would advance to the Bengals 42-yard line, but the threat ended when defensive linemen B.J. Hill and Trey Hendrickson stuffed a fourth-down QB sneak. Browning immediately took advantage, finding Tyler Boyd deep for a 44-yard completion that put the Bengals in position for Evan McPherson's game-winning 29-yard field goal. "Jake's just so steady, you know?" Bengals head coach Zac Taylor said. "He really is. He doesn't get rattled by a negative play. He doesn't overreact to it."

EXTRA POINTS: Raheem Mostert rushed for two touchdowns and Bradley Chubb had seven tackles, three sacks, and two forced fumbles as part of a suffocating defensive effort that carried Miami to a 30-0 blanking of the Jets. ... Josh Allen set an NFL single-season record by posting his 10th game with both a touchdown pass and a rushing touchdown, the mark coming as part of the Bills' 31-10 win over Dallas. ... Baker Mayfield threw for 381 yards and four TDs while attaining a 158.3 passer rating in leading the Buccaneers

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MILAGRO MEANS MIRACLE

In his first season as Texans head coach, DeMeco Ryans (left) led his team to the AFC South title, keyed by wins over the Titans in Week 17 and at Indianapolis in Week 18. The 49ers' Brock Purdy (above) posted the NFL's top passer rating at 113.0 after throwing for 4,280 yards and 32 touchdowns for the NFC West champions. He had four touchdown passes in a Week 16 victory at Arizona.

MICHAEL CONROY/AP IMAGES (Ryans); DANIEL KUCIN JR./AP IMAGES (Purdy)

past Green Bay, 34-20. ... Tanoh Kpassagnon had three of the Saints' six sacks in their 24-6 win over the Giants. ... Julian Love snared two fourth-quarter interceptions and Jaxon Smith-Njigba caught the go-ahead 29-yard touchdown pass with 28 seconds remaining as the Seahawks edged the Eagles, 20-17.

WEEK 16: Detroit in Overdrive

With their 30-24 victory at Minnesota, the Lions reached a number of milestones, none more important than their first division title in three decades. Jahmyr Gibbs sparked the ground game with touchdown runs of 14 and 3 yards while Amon-Ra St. Brown's third-quarter TD catch put Detroit ahead to stay. The Lions' defense recorded four interceptions on the day, including two by Kerby Joseph and another by Ifeatu Melifonwu that ended a last-gasp Vikings drive that reached the Lions 30-yard line. "I'm proud of all the Lions fans out there who've been dying for this for years," head coach Dan Campbell said. "That was for you, too." The division crown was Detroit's first since winning the NFC Central in 1993 and guaranteed the team a home playoff game for the first time in 22 seasons. Detroit also reached the 11-win mark for the first time since 2014, and its 20 wins since the start of 2022 marked the most in franchise history in a two-year span. "This was our chance," said St. Brown, who caught 12 passes in the win. "We couldn't let it slip."

EXTRA POINTS: Behind Matthew Stafford's 328 passing yards and Kyren Williams' 104 yards on the ground, the Rams won for the fifth time in six games, defeating the Saints, 30-22. ... Amari Cooper had 11 receptions for 265 yards and two touchdowns in the Browns' 36-22 victory over Houston. ... The Jets' Breece Hall became the second player in league history with at least 10 receptions, 95 rushing yards, 95 receiving yards, and two rushing touchdowns in a game, accomplishing the feat in a 30-28 win over Washington. ... Jason Sanders kicked three field goals of 50+ yards (57, 52, 54) and then hit the game-winner from 29 yards as time expired to lift the Dolphins over the Cowboys, 22-20.

WEEK 17: Cleveland Clinches

Behind another big effort from Super Bowl XLVII MVP Joe Flacco, the Browns battled their way to a playoff berth with a 37-20 win over the Jets. Flacco threw three first-half touchdowns on his way to a 309-yard passing night and improved to 4-1 as a starter after being signed by Cleveland in November. "You don't know

The Buccaneers earned the NFC South title in large part due to the play of safety Antoine Winfield Jr., who reached double figures in tackles nine times during the season. Among them was a 12-tackle game in the team's Week 15 victory at Green Bay.

how many of these moments you're going to get," said Flacco, who became the first player in NFL history with at least 250 passing yards and two TD passes in each of his first five games with a team. "I'm going to remember this for the rest of my life." Jerome Ford rushed for 64 yards and scored on both of his receptions, a 7-yarder on the Browns' first drive and a 50-yard strike just before halftime, while safety Ronnie Hickman added a 30-yard interception-return touchdown as Cleveland took a 34-17 lead into the locker room. With the win, the Browns locked up their second playoff berth since the 2002 season. "Pretty special night for this organization, pretty special night for the fans out there," Browns head coach Kevin Stefanski said. "They were ready to roll from the jump. It's a big deal when you can clinch and earn that second season."

EXTRA POINTS: San Francisco secured the NFC's top seed with a 27-10 victory at Washington. ... Harrison Butker made all six of his field-goal attempts and accounted for 19 points overall as the Chiefs topped Cincinnati, 25-17, to clinch their eighth consecutive AFC West title. ... Pittsburgh defeated Seattle, 30-23, to improve to 9-7 and secure its 20th season in a row with a .500-or-better record, second only to the Cowboys' run of 21 seasons from 1965-85. ... Arizona overcame a 15-point halftime deficit to clip the Eagles, 35-31, the winning points coming on James Conner's 2-yard TD run with 32 seconds to play. ... Josh Allen became the fifth QB in the Super Bowl era with a rushing touchdown in five consecutive games and Rasul Douglas intercepted two passes, one that he brought back 40 yards for a TD, to lead Buffalo past the Patriots, 27-21. ... Tyrique Stevenson contributed five tackles, four passes defensed, and two interceptions to spark the Bears' 37-17 victory over the Falcons. ... Jordan Love threw for three touchdowns and ran for another in the Packers' 33-10 win over the Vikings.

WEEK 18: Texans Take It

A "win and your in" showdown between the Texans and Colts went Houston's way, 23-19, a victory that not only clinched the franchise's first playoff trip since 2019 but ultimately delivered the AFC South title. C.J. Stroud threw for 264 yards and a pair of touchdowns — including a 75-yard strike to

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FOURTH QUARTER [Weeks 15-18]

SCORES & AWARDS

WEEK 15 [December 14-18]		WEEK 16 [December 21-25]		WEEK 17 [December 28-31]		WEEK 18 [January 6-7]	
CHARGERS	21	SAINTS	22	JETS	20	**STEELERS**	**17**
RAIDERS	**63**	**RAMS**	**30**	**BROWNS**	**37**	RAVENS	10
VIKINGS	24 (OT)	BENGALS	11	LIONS	19	**TEXANS**	**23**
BENGALS	**27**	**STEELERS**	**34**	**COWBOYS**	**20**	COLTS	19
STEELERS	13	**BILLS**	**24**	DOLPHINS	19	**BUCCANEERS**	**9**
COLTS	**30**	CHARGERS	22	**RAVENS**	**56**	PANTHERS	0
BRONCOS	17	COLTS	10	PATRIOTS	21	BROWNS	14
LIONS	**42**	**FALCONS**	**29**	**BILLS**	**27**	**BENGALS**	**31**
FALCONS	7	**PACKERS**	**33**	FALCONS	17	VIKINGS	20
PANTHERS	**9**	PANTHERS	30	**BEARS**	**37**	**LIONS**	**30**
BEARS	17	**BROWNS**	**36**	TITANS	3	**JETS**	**17**
BROWNS	**20**	TEXANS	22	**TEXANS**	**26**	PATRIOTS	3
BUCCANEERS	**34**	**LIONS**	**30**	RAIDERS	20	FALCONS	17
PACKERS	20	VIKINGS	24	**COLTS**	**23**	**SAINTS**	**48**
JETS	0	COMMANDERS	28	PANTHERS	0	JAGUARS	20
DOLPHINS	**30**	**JETS**	**30**	**JAGUARS**	**26**	**TITANS**	**28**
CHIEFS	**27**	**SEAHAWKS**	**20**	**RAMS**	**26**	**SEAHAWKS**	**21**
PATRIOTS	17	TITANS	17	GIANTS	25	CARDINALS	20
GIANTS	6	JAGUARS	12	**CARDINALS**	**35**	BEARS	9
SAINTS	**24**	**BUCCANEERS**	**30**	EAGLES	31	**PACKERS**	**17**
TEXANS	**19** (OT)	CARDINALS	16	**SAINTS**	**23**	**CHIEFS**	**13**
TITANS	16	**BEARS**	**27**	BUCCANEERS	13	CHARGERS	12
49ERS	**45**	COWBOYS	20	**49ERS**	**27**	BRONCOS	14
CARDINALS	29	**DOLPHINS**	**22**	COMMANDERS	10	**RAIDERS**	**27**
COMMANDERS	20	**PATRIOTS**	**26**	**STEELERS**	**30**	EAGLES	10
RAMS	**28**	BRONCOS	23	SEAHAWKS	23	**GIANTS**	**27**
COWBOYS	10	**RAIDERS**	**20**	CHARGERS	9	**RAMS**	**21**
BILLS	**31**	CHIEFS	14	**BRONCOS**	**16**	49ERS	20
RAVENS	**23**	GIANTS	25	BENGALS	17	**COWBOYS**	**38**
JAGUARS	7	**EAGLES**	**33**	**CHIEFS**	**25**	COMMANDERS	10
EAGLES	17	**RAVENS**	**33**	**PACKERS**	**33**	**BILLS**	**21**
SEAHAWKS	**20**	49ERS	19	VIKINGS	10	DOLPHINS	14

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
James Cook, RB, Bills

AFC Defense
Bradley Chubb, LB, Dolphins

AFC Special Teams
Ka'imi Fairbairn, K, Texans

NFC Offense
Baker Mayfield, QB, Buccaneers

NFC Defense
Julian Love, S, Seahawks

NFC Special Teams
Eddy Pineiro, K, Panthers

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Sam LaPorta, Lions, TE

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Amari Cooper, WR, Browns

AFC Defense
Kyle Hamilton, S, Ravens

AFC Special Teams
Jason Sanders, K, Dolphins

NFC Offense
Puka Nacua, WR, Rams

NFC Defense
Ifeatu Melifonwu, S, Lions

NFC Special Teams
Younghoe Koo, K, Falcons

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Puka Nacua, WR, Rams

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
Lamar Jackson, QB, Ravens

AFC Defense
Rasul Douglas, CB, Bills

AFC Special Teams
Harrison Butker, K, Chiefs

NFC Offense
Jordan Love, QB, Packers

NFC Defense
Tyrique Stevenson, CB, Bears

NFC Special Teams
Gunner Olszewski, PR, Giants

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
Zay Flowers, WR, Ravens

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC Offense
C.J. Stroud, QB, Texans

AFC Defense
T.J. Watt, LB, Steelers

AFC Special Teams
Deonte Harty, WR, Bills

NFC Offense
Jordan Love, QB, Packers

NFC Defense
Antoine Winfield Jr., S, Buccaneers

NFC Special Teams
Jamie Gillan, P, Giants

Pepsi Zero Sugar Rookie
C.J. Stroud, QB, Texans

Amari Cooper put on a show in the Browns' Dec. 24 victory over Houston, catching 11 passes for 265 yards and a pair of touchdowns.

Nico Collins on the team's first play from scrimmage — and Devin Singletary gave the Texans the lead for good with his 3-yard scoring run midway through the fourth quarter. Indianapolis would drive deep into Houston territory in the final minutes but failed to convert on fourth-and-1 from the 15-yard line. "Everybody's fighting till that last play, that's what it's about," Texans head coach DeMeco Ryans said. "We punched our ticket." Linebacker Christian Harris contributed 12 tackles and a sack, the Texans' franchise-record 46th on the season. Houston finished 10-7 and completed a worst-to-first turnaround when Tennessee defeated Jacksonville. It marked the 19th time in the past 21 seasons that at least one NFL team won a division crown the season after finishing in last (or tied for last place).

EXTRA POINTS: T.J. Watt had two sacks in the Steelers' 17-10 win over Baltimore, giving him 19 on the year and making him the first player to lead the NFL in that category three times. ... Tampa Bay shut out the Panthers, 9-0, to clinch the NFC South title, an effort led by Antoine Winfield Jr. (sack, forced fumble), who became the first defensive back since 2000 with six sacks and six forced fumbles in a season. ... In the Rams' 21-20 win over the 49ers, Puka Nacua set NFL rookie records for receptions (105) and receiving yards (1,486) in a season. ... Derrick Henry rushed for 153 yards and one touchdown in the Titans' 28-20 victory over Jacksonville. ... CeeDee Lamb caught 13 passes for 98 yards and two TDs as the Cowboys secured the NFC East championship with a 38-10 win at Washington. Lamb finished the year with 135 receptions, sixth-most in NFL history. ... The season's 272nd and final game decided the AFC East, as Buffalo scored fourth-quarter touchdowns on Deonte Harty's 96-yard punt return and Dawson Knox's 5-yard reception to rally past Miami, 21-14, and win the division for the fourth consecutive year.

ERIC CHRISTIAN SMITH/AP IMAGES

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PLAYOFF RECAPS

AFC WILD CARD

Christian Harris (48) had a 36-yard interception-return touchdown in the Texans' victory over the Browns.

	1	2	3	4	F
#5 Browns	7	7	0	0	14
#4 **Texans**	10	14	14	7	**45**

In the Texans' first playoff appearance since 2019, rookie quarterback C.J. Stroud and a ball-hawking defense ignited a rout of Cleveland. Stroud threw for 274 yards and three first-half TDs while — at 22 years and 102 days old — becoming the youngest QB to win an NFL postseason contest. Nico Collins had six receptions for 96 yards, including a 15-yard TD in the first quarter that put the Texans ahead, 10-7. Cleveland briefly regained the lead, but Houston would score the game's final 35 points, starting with Brevin Jordan turning a short reception into a 76-yard touchdown. A 37-yard Stroud-to-Dalton Schultz scoring pass made it 24-10 just before halftime, and in the third quarter, Steven Nelson and Christian Harris returned interceptions for touchdowns that put the game out of reach. Nelson brought his back 82 yards and Harris followed with a 36-yard pick-six on the Browns' next possession. Houston became the first team to return two interceptions for touchdowns in a playoff game since Seattle in 2008.

	1	2	3	4	F
#6 Dolphins	0	7	0	0	7
#3 **Chiefs**	7	9	3	7	**26**

The defending Super Bowl champions withstood brutal conditions to shut down the high-powered Dolphins and advance to the Divisional round for the sixth consecutive season. With the thermometer reading minus-4 degrees at kickoff, it was the fourth-coldest game in NFL history. Still, QB Patrick Mahomes went right to work, marching the Chiefs 69 yards on the game's opening possession, capped by his 11-yard touchdown pass to Rashee Rice. Harrison Butker then added field goals of 28, 26, and 32 yards as Kansas City carried a 16-7 lead into the half. Another Butker field goal and an Isiah Pacheco TD run closed out the Chiefs' scoring. Mahomes completed 23 of 41 passes for 262 yards, with Rice (8 receptions, 130 yards) his favorite target. On defense, Kansas City kept in check a Dolphins attack that averaged a league-best 401.3 yards per game during the regular season. Miami managed just 264 total yards on the night and went 1-for-12 on third down, with the Chiefs' efforts keyed by Nick Bolton (10 tackles), George Karlaftis (1.5 sacks), and Mike Edwards (interception).

	1	2	3	4	F
#7 Steelers	0	7	3	7	17
#2 **Bills**	14	7	3	7	**31**

Josh Allen did it all against the Steelers, throwing for three touchdowns and scurrying for a 52-yard TD run — the second-longest by a quarterback in NFL playoff history — to lift the Bills to victory in a game postponed by a day after more than two feet of snow fell in the region. Buffalo jumped out quickly, with Allen throwing first-quarter scoring passes to tight ends Dawson Knox (9 yards) and Dalton Kincaid (29 yards). A Kaiir Elam interception then set up Allen's long TD run to make it 21-0. Pittsburgh, however, would rally, scoring on three consecutive possessions and getting within 24-17 on Mason Rudolph's 7-yard touchdown pass to Calvin Austin III early in the fourth quarter. The hosts responded by going 70 yards in seven plays and reaching the end zone on a 17-yard Allen-to-Khalil Shakir touchdown pass for the game's final points. Allen threw for 203 yards and ran for another 74, while James Cook paced the Buffalo ground game with 79 rushing yards. A.J. Klein had 11 tackles for the Bills, who won their sixth consecutive game dating back to the regular season.

MARK J. TERRILL/AP IMAGES

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PLAYOFF RECAPS

NFC WILD CARD

Romeo Doubs (87) was one of the Packers' many standouts against the Cowboys, catching six passes for 151 yards.

	1	2	3	4	F
#7 **Packers**	7	20	14	7	**48**
#2 Cowboys	0	7	9	16	32

Behind a dazzling first-half performance, the Packers became the first No. 7 seed to win a postseason game while also bringing Dallas' 16-game home winning streak to an end. The visitors stormed to a 27-0 lead thanks to a pair of Aaron Jones scoring runs, Jordan Love's 20-yard TD pass to Dontayvion Wicks, and Darnell Savage's 64-yard pick-six with 1:50 remaining before halftime. Even as the Cowboys' offense found its gear, Green Bay stayed comfortably ahead. In the third quarter, Jones rushed for his third touchdown and Luke Musgrave caught a 38-yard scoring pass. A 3-yard Love-to-Romeo Doubs TD capped the Packers scoring. Love completed 16 of 21 passes for 272 yards, with Doubs totaling 151 receiving yards on just six catches. Jones rushed for 118 yards, giving him 100+ yards in each of his four career games against the Cowboys. Keisean Nixon had 11 tackles and one of the Packers' four sacks, while Jaire Alexander added an interception. Green Bay improved to 6-0 all time at AT&T Stadium, which includes its victory in Super Bowl XLV.

	1	2	3	4	F
#6 Rams	3	14	3	3	23
#3 **Lions**	14	7	3	0	**24**

A dramatic duel in Detroit was claimed by the host Lions, who won their first playoff game in 32 years. Detroit reached the end zone on each of its first three possessions, getting rushing TDs from David Montgomery and Jahmyr Gibbs before Jared Goff's 2-yard scoring toss to Sam LaPorta made it 21-10. The Lions managed just three points in the second half, but that 54-yard Michael Badgley field goal equaled the longest in franchise playoff history and provided enough of a cushion. For while the Rams had long scoring receptions by Puka Nacua (50 yards) and Tutu Atwell (38 yards), they struggled on their three trips to the red zone, settling for Brett Maher field goals on each occasion. The last of those cut the deficit to one midway through the fourth quarter, but Los Angeles was forced to punt on its next possession and Detroit then ran out the clock to win in the postseason for the first time since defeating Dallas in the 1991 Divisional Playoffs. Alex Anzalone made eight tackles and Aidan Hutchinson had two sacks in the victory.

	1	2	3	4	F
#5 Eagles	0	9	0	0	9
#4 **Buccaneers**	10	6	9	7	**32**

Tampa Bay dominated the defending NFC champions behind the play of quarterback Baker Mayfield, who completed 22 of 36 passes for 337 yards and three touchdowns. The Buccaneers scored the first four times they had the ball, with Mayfield's 44-yard TD strike to David Moore accompanying Chase McLaughlin field goals from 28, 54, and 48 yards to build a 16-3 lead. And while the Eagles were held pointless in the second half, the hosts added a safety, Trey Palmer's 56-yard catch-and-run TD, and Mayfield's 23-yard scoring toss to Chris Godwin. Defense was just as much a part of the story for Tampa Bay. Jamel Dean had a team-best 10 tackles, the Bucs collected three sacks, and the Eagles went a combined 0-for-11 on third- and fourth-down conversion attempts. The win avenged a Week 3 loss to Philadelphia and continued a hot streak for Tampa Bay, which won five of its final six regular-season games to overtake the NFC South field and capture its third consecutive division title.

MICHAEL AINSWORTH/AP IMAGES

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PLAYOFF RECAPS

AFC DIVISIONAL

Isaiah Likely (80) caught a fourth-quarter touchdown pass that helped the Ravens pull away from the Texans.

Travis Kelce scored the Chiefs' first two TDs — on receptions of 22 and 3 yards — in their victory over Buffalo.

	1	2	3	4	F
#4 Texans	3	7	0	0	10
#1 **Ravens**	3	7	7	17	**34**

With Lamar Jackson erupting for a football "double-triple," the Ravens ran away from the Texans to bring an AFC title game to Baltimore for the first time in franchise history. Jackson threw for 152 yards and rushed for another 100 to help the Ravens break a halftime tie. He also became the first quarterback in at least 75 seasons with two touchdown passes, two rushing TDs, 100 rushing yards, and a 100+ passer rating in a game. The teams traded points over the first 30 minutes, with Baltimore getting on the scoreboard on Justin Tucker's 53-yard field goal and Jackson's 3-yard scoring pass to Nelson Agholor. For Houston, Ka'imi Fairbairn hit a 50-yard field goal and Steven Sims had an electrifying 67-yard punt-return TD. But it was all Jackson and the Ravens once they returned to the field. He scored on a 15-yard run on the first possession after intermission and put things out of reach in the fourth quarter, throwing a TD pass to Isaiah Likely and running 8 yards for his second touchdown of the game. Baltimore's win set the stage for the city to host an AFC Championship Game for the first time since the Baltimore Colts defeated the Oakland Raiders following the 1970 season on their way to winning Super Bowl V.

	1	2	3	4	F
#3 **Chiefs**	3	10	7	7	**27**
#2 Bills	3	14	7	0	24

In the first postseason road game of his career, Patrick Mahomes seemed right at home, guiding the Chiefs to victory over Buffalo. Mahomes completed 17 of 23 passes for 215 yards and two touchdowns, both to Travis Kelce, in the see-saw affair that witnessed five lead changes. Isiah Pacheco's 4-yard TD run early in the fourth quarter finally put Kansas City ahead for good, and the defending Super Bowl champions hung on from there to eliminate the Bills from the playoffs for the third time in four years. The outcome, though, remained in doubt until the final minutes when Bills kicker Tyler Bass missed what would have been a game-tying 44-yard field goal. Kansas City took possession, recorded a first down, and was able to run out the clock. Buffalo QB Josh Allen completed 26 of 39 passes for 186 yards and a touchdown, a 13-yard throw to Khalil Shakir that put the Bills ahead, 24-20. He also rushed for 72 yards and two scores. Mahomes and Kelce, meanwhile, set the NFL record for the most career playoff TDs by a quarterback-receiver combination, now with 16, one more than the Patriots/Buccaneers duo of Tom Brady and Rob Gronkowski.

DANIEL KUCIN, JR/AP IMAGES; MATT DURISKO/AP IMAGES (Kelce)

PLAYOFF RECAPS

NFC DIVISIONAL

Dre Greenlaw (57) clinched the 49ers' victory over Green Bay with his second interception of the game.

	1	2	3	4	F
#7 Packers	3	3	15	0	21
#1 **49ers**	0	7	7	10	**24**

The most-played postseason rivalry in NFL history added another memorable chapter as the 49ers avoided an upset on Christian McCaffrey's late touchdown run. QB Brock Purdy was near-perfect on the game-winning drive, completing 6 of 7 passes for 47 yards before McCaffrey powered into the end zone from 6 yards out with 1:07 remaining. 49ers linebacker Dre Greenlaw then sealed the outcome with his second interception of the night. Green Bay trailed, 7-6, at halftime, before Jordan Love threw third-quarter TD passes to Bo Melton and Tucker Craft, the latter set up by Keisean Nixon's 73-yard kickoff return. And even though McCaffrey had a 39-yard touchdown run sandwiched between those scores, the Packers carried a 21-14 advantage into the final 15 minutes. Jake Moody's 52-yard field goal cut the margin to four points, and after Green Bay missed a 41-yard field goal with 6:21 to go, the 49ers marched 69 yards in 12 plays for the decisive points. San Francisco's defense did its part in the first half, limiting the Packers to field goals on two red zone possessions and getting a stop on a fourth-and-1 from the 14-yard line on another. The meeting was the 10th in the postseason between the teams, with San Francisco coming out on top for the fifth consecutive time.

	1	2	3	4	F
#4 Buccaneers	3	7	7	6	23
#3 **Lions**	3	7	7	14	**31**

Detroit extended its storybook season by another week, breaking a 17-17 tie with touchdowns on back-to-back fourth-quarter possessions and then hanging on to defeat the Buccaneers. Jahmyr Gibbs gave the Lions a lead they wouldn't relinquish with his 31-yard touchdown run around the left side, and Jared Goff's second TD pass of the day, a 9-yarder to Amon-Ra St. Brown with 6:22 remaining, made it a two-score game. Tampa Bay inched closer on a Baker Mayfield-to-Mike Evans touchdown pass and had the ball one more time, but linebacker Derrick Barnes' interception in the final minute sewed up the Detroit victory. Goff completed 30 of 43 passes for 287 yards, which included a 9-yard TD toss to Josh Reynolds, while St. Brown finished the game with eight receptions for 77 yards. Gibbs totaled 74 yards rushing and caught four passes for another 40 yards, while backfield mate Craig Reynolds added a critical touchdown, carrying the ball into the end zone on a fourth-and-goal from the 1 with the game tied, 10-10. The win put the Lions into the NFC Championship Game for the first time in 32 years and for just the second time in franchise history.

ASHLEY LANDIS/AP IMAGES; RICK OSENTOSKI/AP IMAGES (Gibbs)

Jahmyr Gibbs rushed for 74 yards, including a tie-breaking 31-yard TD, in the Lions' win over the Buccaneers.

WHEN THE SON SHINES

FOR THOSE WHO JUST MISSED OUT ON WINNING IT ALL, SEEING THEIR CHILD BASK IN SUPER BOWL GLORY IS THE NEXT-BEST THING.

BY TOM PELISSERO

Brad Hopkins came within 1 yard of a ring.

It was Super Bowl XXXIV between Hopkins' Tennessee Titans and the St. Louis Rams, who preserved a 23-16 win when linebacker Mike Jones famously stopped wide receiver Kevin Dyson and his outstretched arm just shy of the goal line as time expired.

Little could Hopkins know that his son Brycen — who, as a 2-year-old, sat in the stands that day in January 2000 — would play a critical role in the Rams' next Super Bowl win 22 years later.

When Brad saw his son after Brycen won Super Bowl LVI, he recalls: "I cussed. And [Brycen] knew exactly what I meant. I was just shaking my head staring at him. It encapsulated everything, because I'm standing there on the field with all this confetti. I remember what it was like being on that stage and in that moment, playing your heart out and seeing if you can win a ring. But then to be on the other side, because I'm supporting the winner of the Super Bowl — it was a bittersweet situation."

The Patriots' Matthew Slater rejoices following the team's stunning victory over the Seahawks in Super Bowl XLIX. It marked the first of three such triumphs for Slater, whose father, Jackie (inset), came up shy in his lone Super Bowl appearance.

Seven father-son combinations have won Super Bowls as players, a list headlined by Howie and Chris Long, Bob and Brian Griese, and Ronnie Lott and his son Ryan Nece.

But there's also a fascinating history of NFL families — the Mannings (Archie and sons Peyton and Eli), the Matthews (Clay Jr. and Clay III), the Winfields (Antoine Sr. and Jr.), and the Jeffersons (Shawn and Van), among others — in which the fathers never quite tasted Super Bowl glory but were able to watch their sons win rings years down the road.

As with many father-son stories, there was often some childhood inspiration.

'I DID FEEL LIKE *WE* GOT ONE'

Years before he became a three-time champion, Matthew Slater remembers watching a VHS tape of his father's lone Super Bowl appearance.

"We did it a couple times. He was 10 or 11," Jackie Slater says, adding with a laugh, "I remember him asking a couple times, 'Did you win?'"

Jackie was one of the greatest offensive tackles in NFL history, earning seven Pro Bowl nods in 20 seasons with the Rams and a spot in the Pro Bowl Football Hall of Fame. But his only shot at a ring came up short with a 31-19 loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers in Super Bowl XIV.

"To have my dad relive the game almost series by series, you hear the disappointment in his voice," Matthew says. "My dad was the ultimate team player, and the one thing he wanted more than anything was to experience the ultimate team success."

Born five years after that Super Bowl loss, Matthew has become a standout in his own right, earning 10 Pro Bowl nods over 16 seasons with the New England Patriots. His longtime head coach, Bill Belichick, has called him the greatest special teams player of all time.

Matthew's first opportunity at a ring came up short, too, in a last-minute 21-17 setback to the New York Giants in Super Bowl XLVI.

When the Patriots had another chance three years later in Super Bowl XLIX against the Seattle Seahawks, Matthew says, "I felt a sense of urgency. To me, it was going to be a failure unless we won the game. To actually win that game was special — not just for me, but for my whole family. I felt like my dad won a piece of that Super Bowl with me."

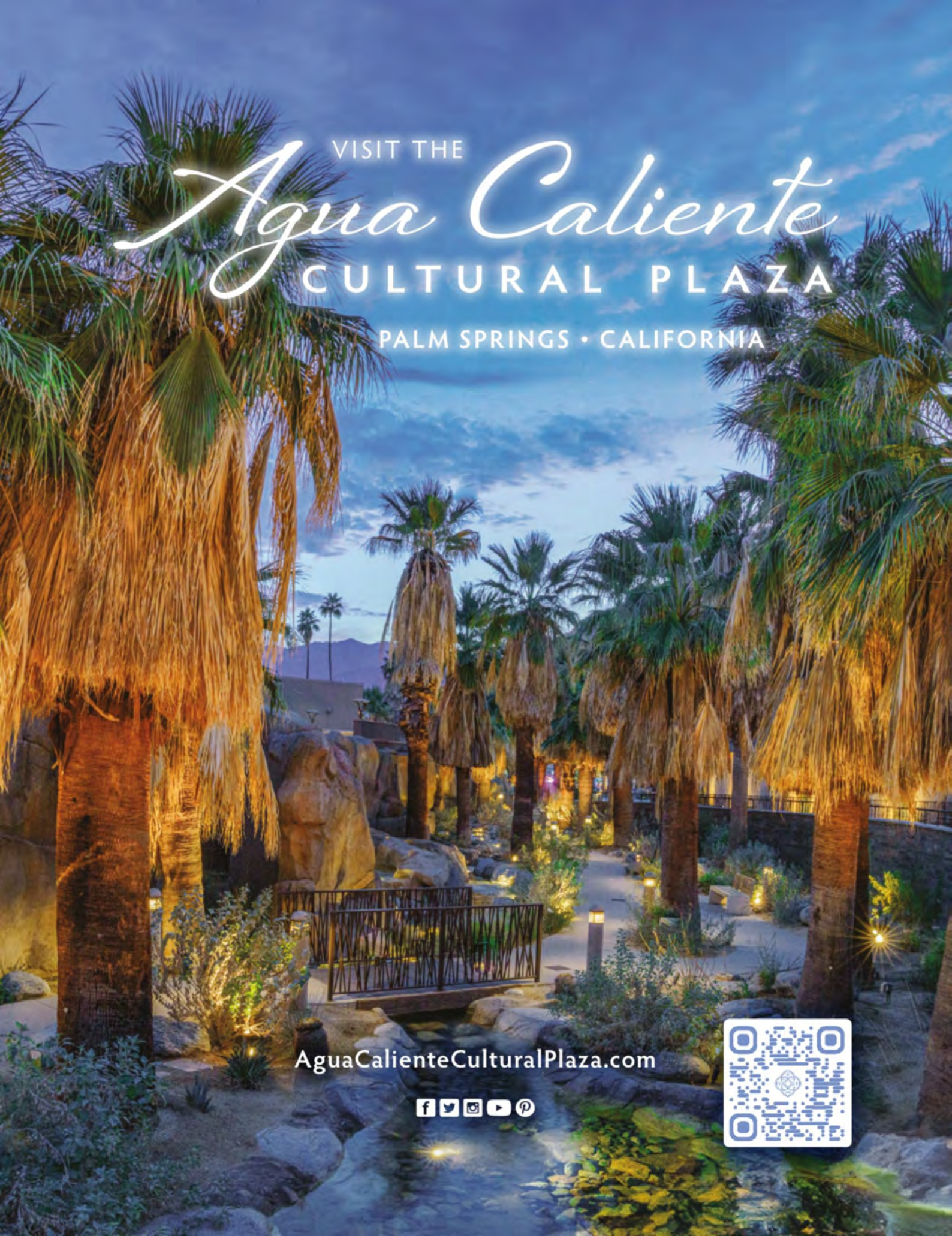
It was one of the most thrilling finishes in Super Bowl history, with Malcolm Butler's goal line interception of a Russell Wilson pass snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. Jackie was in the stadium that day, as well as for Matthew's other four title-game appearances, including victories in Super Bowls LI and LIII.

Matthew Slater (right) holds the Lombardi Trophy following New England's Super Bowl LIII triumph. The Patriots defeated the Rams, the team that Slater's father, Jackie (left), played for his entire NFL career.

As he stood on the field after the win over the Seahawks, Jackie recalls: "I do remember thinking to myself, 'Man, I worked my rear end off to get to this game.' The feeling that we had with 11 minutes to go in [Super Bowl XIV]: We had the lead, I was rejuvenated, playing with a lot more robust energy — and, then, all of a sudden, boom, the game is over and we lost. And it was one of the most disappointing outings that I ever had.

"Then to see and feel that my son was possibly going to lose the Super Bowl, and to watch them come back and actually win it. I don't really have words to express how happy I was for him. I did feel like *we* got one."

JAMIE SQUIRE/GETTY IMAGES (Matthew Slater); JOHN W. MCDONOUGH/GETTY IMAGES (Jackie Slater)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The Phillips family coaching tree started with Bum (above), who twice had the Houston Oilers within one game of the Super Bowl. His son, Wade (far left), won the family's first ring as defensive coordinator of the Super Bowl 50 champion Broncos, and grandson Wes (center), now the offensive coordinator of the Vikings, added a second when he was tight ends coach for the Super Bowl LVI champion Rams.

'HE WAS MY HERO'

After nearly four decades coaching in the NFL, the Phillips family finally got its first ring, with Wade coordinating a dominant Denver Broncos defense that led the way to victory in Super Bowl 50.

"Right at the end of the game, (Broncos head coach) Gary Kubiak patted me on the head and said, 'Your dad would've loved this,'" Phillips recalls. "I almost broke down right there."

Bum Phillips "was my hero," Wade says of his father, a giant in the sport who'd coached his son in high school and college, then hired Wade as a young assistant at Oklahoma State and later with the Houston Oilers. Twice they nearly went to a Super Bowl together but fell to the eventual Super Bowl champion Steelers in the AFC Championship Game in both 1978 and 1979.

Wade's first trip to the title game was forgettable: a 55-10 blowout loss to the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl XXIV.

He went on to become the head coach of the Broncos, Buffalo Bills, and Dallas Cowboys before returning to Denver as defensive coordinator on Kubiak's staff in 2015. Twenty-six years after that first Super Bowl defeat, and two years after Bum passed away at age 90, Wade's defense stifled NFL MVP Cam Newton and the Carolina Panthers to seize a 24-10 victory.

"I was in the stands screaming. I had Broncos gear on, supporting Dad," says Wade's son, Wes, who at the time was an assistant coach for Washington's NFL team. "We met him outside in the parking lot and went to the after-party and just had a great time. There was a lot of our family — his sisters and my cousins and all kinds of people there. For me, it was a cap-off for my dad of what I have always felt is one of the great defensive coordinating careers in this league. I was just so happy for him."

When Wade went to another Super Bowl three years later with the Rams, he paid homage to Bum, wearing his dad's sheepskin coat as he got off the team plane in Atlanta. The Rams' offense went dormant in a 13-3 loss to the Patriots, depriving Wade of a second ring, and his contract expired after the game. But when the Rams won it all three years later, Wade was there — cheering on Wes, who had joined the team as tight ends coach.

"He was almost in tears. My mom was definitely in tears," Wes says. "To see your parents, and you're so thankful for them. I do think it's neat that my family is three generations [in the league]. That's what we know: We know the NFL. NFL football is what we grew up with. It was special for me for sure."

Someone once asked Wade, "What's better than winning the Super Bowl?"

"I said, 'Well, seeing your son win the Super Bowl,'" he recalls. "I didn't get to do it with my dad, but I got to see it with my son, so that's pretty neat."

HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES (Wade Phillips); STEPHEN MATUREN/GETTY IMAGES (Wes Phillips); WALTER IOOSS JR./GETTY IMAGES (Bum Phillips)

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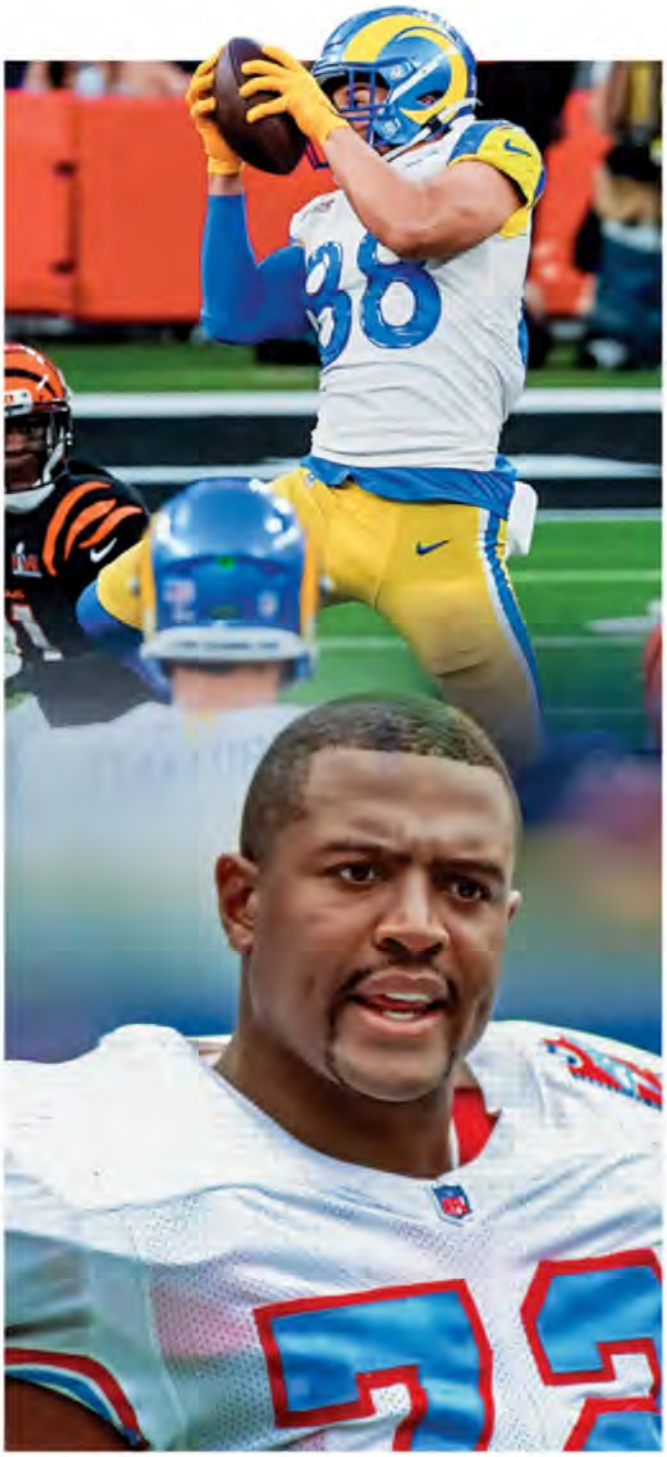
'WE WANT OUR KIDS TO BE BETTER THAN WE WERE'

In the week leading up to Super Bowl LVI against the Cincinnati Bengals, Brycen Hopkins says he felt his father "was trying to be light-footed. He didn't want to put too much pressure on me or make me think the outcome of the game was going to change anything. He had a lot of kind and wise words to share with me. But at the same time, he's always been that way. He doesn't want to put too much weight on me, so he just kind of lets me do my thing. We're two different people."



Brycen Hopkins (top) had one career reception before making four catches in the Rams' Super Bowl LVI win over the Bengals. His father, Brad (bottom), spent 13 seasons in the NFL and was part of the Tennessee Titans team that came up one yard short in Super Bowl XXXIV.

TONY GUTIERREZ/AP IMAGES (Brycen Hopkins); GEORGE GOLIC/WISH/GETTY IMAGES (Brad Hopkins)

Brad Hopkins was a football lifer who played his entire 13-year career with the Oilers/Titans organization, making two Pro Bowls.

Brycen didn't even play organized football until his junior year of high school, focusing instead on basketball. But he flashed enough potential to earn a scholarship to Purdue and later become a fourth-round pick by the Rams in the 2020 NFL Draft.

Entering the Super Bowl, Brycen had exactly one career catch. But when injuries struck, he was left as the team's only healthy tight end — and he delivered in a huge way, catching four passes for 47 yards in the Rams' 23-20 win.

"It's weird. Especially me not playing football my entire life, just kind of picking it up. You thank genetics, divinity, whatever you want to say," Brycen says. "But I'm on a path that external forces are keeping me on no matter how many times I try to stray."

The whole Hopkins family — Dad, Mom, their spouses, and Brycen's brother and sister — was in SoFi Stadium to watch as the improbable unfolded.

"There's almost an air of jealousy. But that's what's supposed to happen," Brad says. "As fathers, we want our kids to be better than we were. For us to even play at this level and play in the Super Bowl, that's so unique. But then to have our kids play in that same game and ultimately get a 'W,' too, it's incredible."

Adds Brycen, with a laugh: "And I get to rub it in his face for the rest of my life."

Tom Pelissero is an NFL Network Insider who has covered the league since 2003. He lives outside of Minneapolis with his wife and two daughters.

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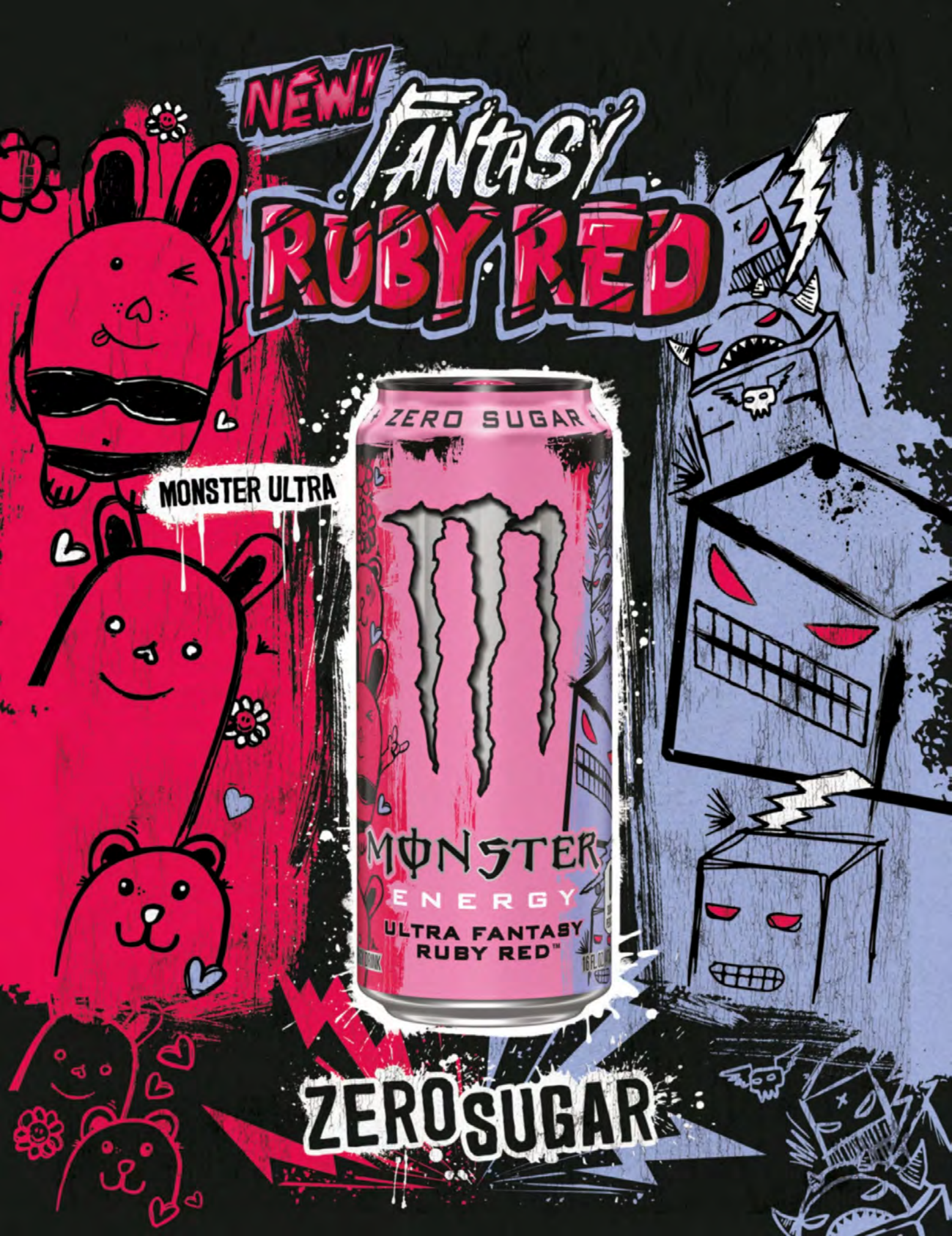
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NO OFFENSE TAKEN

James Harrison (92) made arguably the biggest defensive play in Super Bowl history when he brought back an interception 100 yards for a TD, swinging momentum to the Steelers in their Super Bowl XLIII win.

Scoring may be all the talk in today's NFL, but incredible defensive moments have defined recent Super Bowls.

BY IAN RAPOPORT

AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

FOR SURE, THE OLD ADAGE IS CORRECT. No matter how many offensive fireworks we celebrate — whether from Joe Montana or Ben Roethlisberger or Patrick Mahomes — there is always another story.

There is always a rub.

Yes, defense does still win championships. In fact, the Super Bowl has featured some of the most indelible defensive plays in the game's history.

And while everyone loves a dramatic game-winning touchdown, a last-second field goal, or a juggling catch off a tipped pass while falling down and surrounded by defenders, it's the defensive plays that make you stand up and yell at your TV.

Without further ado, here is one writer's take on the top five defensive plays in the Super Bowl from the past 25 years:

SUPER BOWL XLIII:

James Harrison goes the distance with a 100-yard interception return

With each legendary moment, there is always a lasting image. And for this one, after the burly, bruising, tough-guy Steelers linebacker ducked and dodged, swerved and evaded, and simply outran every Cardinal chasing him, James Harrison had nothing left.

There he was on his back, flat, arms out, gasping for air, an official signaling TD ... and with Arizona wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald kneeling in defeat as Harrison soaked up the glory. It's that visual no one will ever forget.

When re-watching the play recently, Harrison explained that he had been a step slow on blitzes against QB Kurt Warner, so he faked a blitz and, of course, Warner threw it right to him.

"I can't believe he just thew that ball," Harrison once said.

And for more than 15 seconds, he ran. With 18 seconds left on the second-quarter clock when the play began, he had no margin for error. Neither did his team, considering the Cardinals, trailing 10-7, had driven down to the 1-yard line — and were about to end the half with serious momentum.

In stepped Harrison, though it wasn't always clear he was going to make it, as his internal monologue ran wild. He wondered, "Where did all the red jerseys come from?" He danced around Warner and others, passed Tim Hightower, and used a Lamarr Woodley block, then out of nowhere comes Fitzgerald swiping at the ball.

They all tumbled into the end zone, and Harrison could barely function. A trainer checked on him, but all that mattered was this: He had his iconic moment. It helped the Steelers capture another Super Bowl.

JOHN BREWER/GETTY IMAGES

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SUPER BOWL XLIX:

Malcolm Butler's goal line interception takes the Seahawks' breath away

Look away, Seahawks fans. Move on to the next play. As incredible as this is for the Patriots, and it is for sure one of the best plays in franchise history, it's that painful for Seattle. "Why didn't we just give it to Marshawn Lynch?" is a question that'll haunt Seahawks fans forever.

But in New England, what they remember is defensive coach Brian Flores looking at the Seattle personnel group and screaming, "Malcolm, GO!" In came Malcolm Butler, the undersized, undrafted free agent cornerback, even as everyone expected the Seahawks — positioned at the Patriots 1-yard line — to simply hand it to their powerful All-Pro running back.

"I thought they were going to run the ball, too," said Butler, while reliving the moment during a rebroadcast on NBC a few years later.

Yet he also saw QB Russell Wilson looking just a little bit too long at his receiver. And Butler pounced in a way he didn't quite do in practice. To be sure, New England had practiced this exact scenario with this exact play, and Butler was a step late. Not this time.

"I said if my receiver plants on the outside, I'm going to go and just hope the ball is there. I saw the ball and it was coming so fast," Butler recounted.

Without time to think or even move, Butler caught the ball in his stomach and secured it. And New England had as dramatic a Super Bowl win as they've ever had. With all due respect to Adam Vinatieri and James White, Butler's heroics stand out as first on the list.

SUPER BOWL XLIV:

Tracy Porter jumps a Peyton Manning pass for a pick-6 to send New Orleans into delirium

This writer has seen hundreds of games from a press box and is well-trained to never make a sound or react. There was one exception. When Tracy Porter jumped a Reggie Wayne route, it was *everything*. It was the plucky underdog Saints, from a community still devastated by natural disaster, winning their first Super Bowl. It was the Colts' Peyton Manning — instead of leading a game-tying TD drive — being beaten by a better and more opportunistic defense. It was Porter once again thwarting an all-time great.

And, yes, this writer yelled. But that's OK. So did the entire stadium. It was that dramatic. The highlight features Porter stepping in front of a pass, securing it, then streaking 74 yards for the "W."

But as he explained later, the work began much earlier. The entire Saints secondary had watched film upon arriving at the Super Bowl in Miami, and Pierson Prioleau, one of the veterans, joked that the Colts ran one route combination so much, they better pick one off.

And during the game, Porter saw it. Austin Collie ran in motion, tipping everyone off. But Porter knew, if he made a hand signal, Manning would see it and change the play. So, he simply nodded at Malcolm Jenkins.

"We ran that play about four times that game. He was waiting on it," Wayne told NFL Network.

They knew.

"The rest is history," Porter said.

And while any game-winning Super Bowl play is meaningful, this one had so many layers. Drew Brees and Sean Payton had brought the city of New Orleans, still recovering from Hurricane Katrina, its first Super Bowl title. It brought redemption. It was a brutal near-miss for Manning.

And it was one of the most yell-inducing plays in recent memory.

JOHN IACONO/GETTY IMAGES (Butler); EZRA SHAW/GETTY IMAGES (Porter)

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SUPER BOWL 50:

Von Miller sacks Cam Newton to create a TD and begin one of the most dominant defensive performances ever

Rarely does the game's most important play happen in the first quarter. No matter how heroic, first-quarter plays can disappear into oblivion by the time the star-studded halftime show takes flight.

Then there was the Broncos' Von Miller overwhelming Carolina tackle Mike Remmers and sacking Cam Newton on the sixth snap of the game, pulling the football from his hands and allowing it to squirt free into the beefy palms of Malik Jackson for a touchdown.

"I'm going for the ball every time," Miller said then.

There were other plays. But that was the symbol. That sent the message that maybe Denver was right, maybe the Panthers hadn't played an opponent like them, and maybe Newton couldn't hold up.

As linebacker Brandon Marshall told reporters postgame, "That play did it. That play rattled him. We got in his mind."

Miller ended up as the game's MVP, with six tackles, 2.5 sacks, and two forced fumbles that resulted in Denver's only touchdowns while carrying Peyton Manning to another Lombardi Trophy. All awesome.

But it was the first one that delivered the message. It was the first one that served as the poster for a swarming, suffocating, disruptive defense that turned Superman into Mortal Man.

Thanks in part to that first sack, Newton was slowed. He ended the half crushed by DeMarcus Ware and rose with caution and trepidation. He wasn't the same. Denver's defense was his kryptonite, with Miller wielding it.

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SUPER BOWL XXXIV:

Mike Jones tackles Titans WR Kevin Dyson just short of the goal line as the clock reads 00:00 to secure a title

The Greatest Show on Turf won the Super Bowl thanks to a tackle. There is irony in there somewhere, but there is also truth. With all the yards and highlights and flash plays, there was a sturdy tackle from a linebacker who did it the way you would teach in Pee Wee football.

When Titans quarterback Steve McNair hit Kevin Dyson on a slant with the clock ticking down, it appeared the receiver had the advantage as he turned toward the goal line. But the Rams' Mike Jones wrapped his right arm around Dyson's waist, then draped his left around Dyson's hip.

At that point, Jones started to roll as Dyson reached out ... only to end up a few inches short.

The realization came quickly, with none other than Rams head coach Dick Vermeil squealing on the sidelines, "Didn't make it! Didn't make it! The game's [over]. It's over."

And it was. The Titans have yet to reach the Super Bowl again, while St. Louis cemented itself as not only one of the most fun teams to win it all, but a sensation.

QB Kurt Warner was on his way to becoming a Hall of Famer, and the sport suddenly took off in a way that showed the Rams were ahead of their time. Consider their production: a 13-3 record, 400.8 offensive yards per game, and 32.9 points per game.

That was only the beginning. The NFL is now more high-flying, with more throwing it around and more offense in general.

And some of that can be attributed to the Rams winning it all. And, yes, plenty of that can be attributed to Jones, who simply did his job in his usual matter-of-fact way. Jones was a more-than-solid defender in the NFL, starting 99 games and once eclipsing 100 tackles in a season, though he never made a Pro Bowl.

But his one moment in time, his iconic display of toughness and technique, will live forever.

Ian Rapoport is NFL Network's Insider. Follow him on X @RapSheet.

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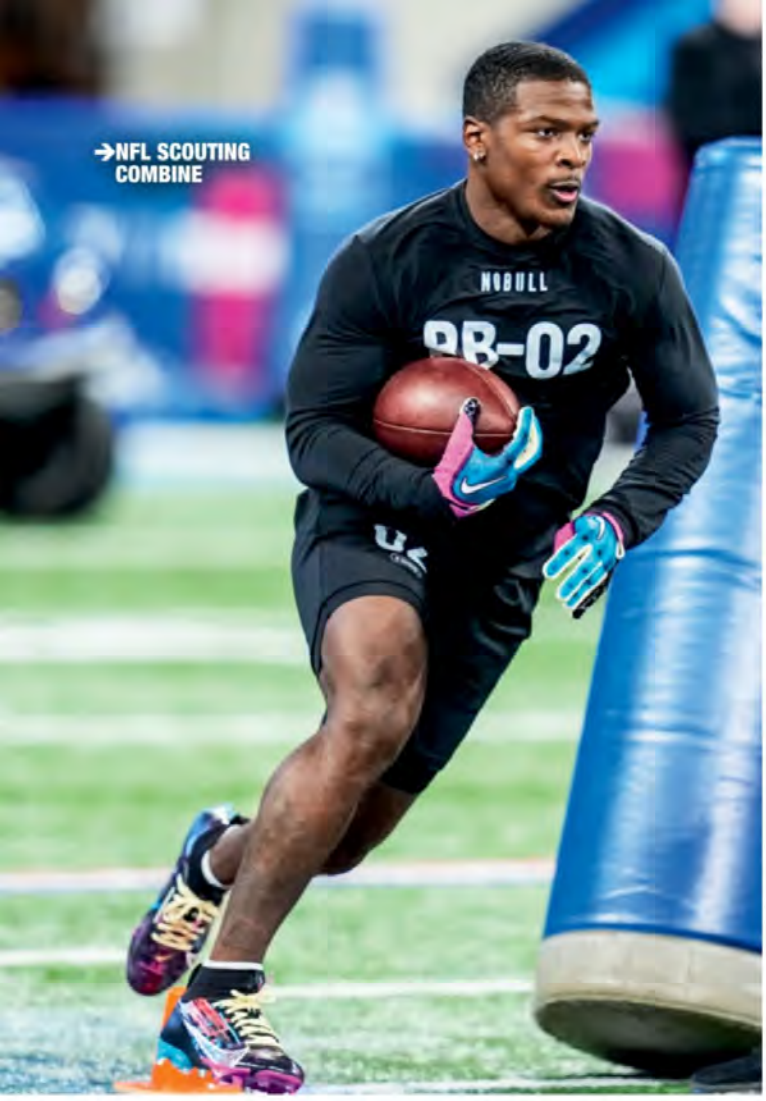

THE YEAR

FEBRUARY 27 – MARCH 4
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NFL SCOUTING COMBINE

Since 1987, the NFL Scouting Combine has been held in Indianapolis. This year, Lucas Oil Stadium will welcome more than 300 pro prospects for testing, drills, and workouts in advance of the NFL Draft, and NFL Network will again provide live coverage each day. Learn more at **NFL.com/combine**.

MARCH

FREE AGENCY/ ANNUAL LEAGUE MEETING

March is one of the busiest months of the non-playing season. The 2024 League Year commences Wednesday, March 13, at 4 p.m., highlighted by the start of free agency. Less than two weeks later, on March 24-27, NFL owners, coaches, and general managers gather in Orlando to discuss "all things NFL," including any changes to the playing rules for the 2024 season. Stay on top of the news at **NFL.com**.

APRIL 25-27
DETROIT

NFL DRAFT

Detroit's Campus Martius Park and Hart Plaza host the 89th annual NFL Draft. NFL Network and ESPN will provide full live coverage of the three-day event — which begins in prime time on April 25 — while ABC will televise the first round. More details, including the updated draft order, are available at **NFL.com/draft**.

MID-JULY

TRAINING CAMP

With the start of training camp, NFL teams officially begin their quest for a Super Bowl title. Follow NFL.com and NFL Network for analysis and insights from around the league, and NFL Network will televise every preseason game. Get updates at **NFL.com/trainingcamp**.

DARRON CUMMINGS/AP IMAGES; JEFF ROBERSON/AP IMAGES (C.J. Stroud)

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SEPTEMBER 5

NFL KICKOFF

The 2024 NFL season opens with a day-long celebration at the home of the Super Bowl LVIII champion, continuing a tradition that began in 2004. This year's event featured performances by the Kansas City Boys and Girls Choir and Natalie Grant prior to the Chiefs-Lions contest. Learn more at **NFL.com/kickoff**.

DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED

INTERNATIONAL GAMES

For the 16th time in 17 years, the NFL will hold regular-season games outside of the United States. Next year's slate includes three contests in London, one in Germany, and one in Brazil — marking the first time the NFL is playing a regular-season game in South America. Look for the official announcement of dates and team matchups at **NFL.com**.

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SUPER BOWL LIX

Caesars Superdome, home of the New Orleans Saints, will host the Super Bowl for the eighth time when the NFL caps its 105th season with Super Bowl LIX. The game will be televised by FOX. Learn more about the game and the events leading up to it at **NFL.com/superbowl** and **nolasuperbowl.com**.

CHARLIE RIEDEL/AP IMAGES (Patrick Mahomes); DAVID DERMER/AP IMAGES; SUE OGROCKI/AP IMAGES (Bottom right)

BY MARCUS ALLEN

A Run Into History

SUPER BOWL XVIII WAS A TRIUMPH FOR BOTH THE RAIDERS AND A LIFE DEDICATED TO FOOTBALL.

As I reflect on my journey through football, one moment stands out like a beacon, etching itself into my memory and, in a small way, football history. It was January 1984, and I was completing my second season with the Raiders on the grandest stage of them all: the Super Bowl.

While Tampa Stadium was some 2,500 miles from where I grew up in San Diego, that field — honestly, every football field — felt like home. Football was more than a sport to me; it was a passion that consumed my thoughts and fueled my dreams. And from the beginning, I knew I had something special to offer the game.

My high school years were a whirlwind of victories, accolades, and a growing determination to excel at the next level, and my time at Southern Cal was transformative. It was there that I harnessed my skills not only as a running back, but as a receiver and a blocker that would serve me so well in the NFL.

From the moment the Raiders drafted me in 1982, I knew I was ready to make my mark with the franchise that had a "commitment to excellence." The Raiders had won the Super Bowl two years earlier, and it was clear they were motivated to get there again. We fell short my rookie season, but nothing could hold us back that next year.

Marcus Allen (32) heads to the end zone on his 74-yard touchdown run that sealed the Raiders' win over Washington in Super Bowl XVIII.

We won the AFC West and I ran for 1,000 yards and caught 68 passes out of the backfield. I even threw three touchdown passes. With the support of my Raiders teammates and coaches, my confidence grew, and it was a great feeling to score touchdowns in our two playoff wins that put us in the Super Bowl.

The anticipation leading up to the game was electric, and the fact that Washington was the defending Super Bowl champion only added to that. Once the game started, every play seemed to bring us closer to our goal.

Then came that pivotal moment. There were only a few seconds remaining in the third quarter, and our defense had just stopped Washington on downs. As we took over at our own 26-yard line, the offense wanted to seize the opportunity to make a final statement.

We were already ahead, 28-9, so perhaps the coaches envisioned a long drive to run time off the clock. It didn't quite turn out that way. On first down, we called a run play, "17 Bob Trey O," to go around the left side. But after I took the handoff, the defense quickly closed in, so I reversed course — looking more to avoid a big loss than to have a big gain. That's when everything slowed down.

Still a good five yards behind the line of scrimmage, I saw a seam in the middle of the field. That was my opening, and I took it. As I dodged defenders, every step propelled me forward with purpose. The path ahead became clear, and 74 yards later, as I crossed the goal line, I felt the stadium erupt in cheers.

That touchdown run was the culmination of years of hard work, dedication, and my deep love for the game. And being named Super Bowl MVP was an honor that humbled me, for it was recognition of not only that play and that game, but of the journey that led me there and all those who pushed me to be better.

Football is an amazing game, capable of providing moments one could never imagine with heroes you'd never expect. At Super Bowl LVIII, we don't know which player will do something special, something memorable, something that will forever become part of the Super Bowl story.

But we do know that someone will. And I'll be cheering for him as loudly as anyone.

Super Bowl XVIII MVP Marcus Allen played 11 of his 16 NFL seasons with the Raiders. He was enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2003.

AP IMAGES; DAVID BECKER/AP IMAGES (Top)

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